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The Making of a Liberal

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EDITED BY

GEORGE HERBERT CLARKE



January-March, 1924

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[No. 1

AVERNEL

From Avernèl the hills flow down
And leave it near the sky,
And it has birds and bells and trees
And fauns that never die.

When coral-pink azaleas fill
Its roomy woods with sweet
And lilac spills of violets wait
For violet-veined swift feet;

When moths are budded by the oaks'
Uncrinkling rose and red
And high, high up, green butterflies
Reveal the poplars' head;

When shaggy clouds in single bliss
Blaze up the sea-blue air,
Spilling their shadow-amethyst
Along the hills' wide stair;

Then there is singing in the sun
And whispering in the shade
And dancing till the stars slope down
Their murmurous arcade.

In love's half sleep the curly faun's
Uncertain if he sees
Orion or first fireflies
Between the clear dark trees.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY.

Greenville, Mississippi.

THE SPELL OF FLORENCE

The complaint has often been made by readers of *The Faerie Queene* that the structure of the epic is so complicated and its action so confused that it is impossible to gain a clear idea of the whole. Yet through all the cantos of the several Books one main thought runs like a golden thread. It is the worship of Gloriana, the Faerie Queene, which inspires each and all of the champions whose deeds Spenser relates—the Red Cross Knight, Prince Arthur, Sir Guyon, Sir Calidore, and the rest—and that worship gives the poem unity and coherence.

The same complaint has often been made with regard to the epic of Florence. It is certainly not surprising that a story so crowded with incident, so resplendent with the glories of Art and Literature, should seem confused and confusing by reason of its very richness.

And yet, through that epic, as through *The Faerie Queene*, there runs a binding golden thread. Florence is neither a geographical expression nor a civic institution. She is an entity, living and beloved, and those who have heard the report of her say that the half was not told them when they see her with their eyes. As Spenser says of his Gloriana:—

. . . . if in that picture dead
Such life ye read, and vertue in vaine shew;
What mote ye weene, if the trew lively-head
Of that most glorious visage ye did vew:
But yf the beauty of her mind ye knew,
That is, her bounty, and imperiall powre,
Thousand times fairer than her mortall hew,
O! how great wonder would your thoughts devoure,
And infinite desire into your spirite poure.

Shée is the mighty Queene of Faery,
Whose faire retraits I in my shield doe beare;
Shée is the flowre of grace and chastity
Throughout the world, renowned far and neare,
My liefe, my liege, my Soveraine, my deare,
Whose glory shineth as the morning starre,
And with her light the earth enlumines cleare:
Far reach her mercies, and her praises farre,
As well in state of peace, as puissaunce in warre.¹

¹*The Faerie Queene*, Book II, Canto IX, stanzas 3, 4.

The citizens of Florence worshipped her as a Queen, and at the same time cherished and championed her as the Lady of their heart. Of Dante, Giotto, Savonarola, Michelangelo, and all the splendid train, it might be said as of the Red Cross Knight.—

Upon a great adventure he was bound,
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,
(That greatest Glorious Queene of Faery lond)
To winne him worshippe and her grace to have,
Which of all earthly thinges he most did crave.²

The gratitude of Florence was the highest honor they could know, her anger the sharpest pang they could endure. In the epic of Florence, Florence is herself the heroine, and it is only when we realize this that order dawns in the confusion and the whole scene falls into perspective.

But—it may be said—is not this true of all national history? Are not the thoughts and desires of all patriots centred upon their own land? That such a feeling is inseparable from all true patriotism cannot be denied, but it must be remembered that the history of Florence is marked out by certain special conditions and characteristics: she was a city, not a country, and her architects and artists built and adorned the churches and palaces that they would pass every day as they went about their ordinary business, in whose halls they would gather while living, and beneath whose shadow they would lie when dead. She was a city, not a country, and therefore the inhabitants were well known to one another: a speech made in her Council chamber was given notoriety by the tongues of the speaker's friends and acquaintances; a picture painted by one of her great artists was the talk of the quarter in which he lived, so that an eager procession was ready to follow Cimabue's Madonna when it left his studio for its home in Santa Maria Novella; a poem penned by one of her great writers was passed from hand to hand till it became so familiar that the very workmen sang it as they plied their tools. The personal note was present in every undertaking, in every achievement, as it can never be present in the undertakings and achievements of a country or an Empire.

²*Ibid.*, Book I, Canto I, stanza 3.

Florence was a microcosm, and in a microcosm activities can be observed and noted that in a wider sphere are blurred, or even lost.

At the same time, this microcosm was a cosmos: her limitations were limitations of space, not of spirit; she numbered among her sons intellects as vast, natures as rare, as any the world has known, so that it has often been said that only in the golden days of Athens could any other city boast of such a galaxy of genius.

These are characteristics that command admiration, and they are also conditions that explain it; but the Faerie Queene of cities evokes love as well as worship, and this, say the Florentines, is the reason why she has no Fountain of Trevi. To that fountain in Rome a special virtue is attributed, for the traveller who drinks from its waters is said to be bound to return to the city, but Florence weaves a charm about the stranger within her gates—a spell that inevitably draws him back to her without the need of any magical draught.

That this claim is a just one, few travellers in Italy will deny. Rome, with its vast historical interest, its worldwide imperial demands, fills the soul with awe; Naples, with its gleaming blue seas, its radiance of light and color, awakens a rapture of admiration; Venice, with its exotic buildings, its dreaming lagoons, its snatches of music under a starlit sky, rouses a passionate delight; but Florence, with less of majesty than Rome, less of tropical splendor than Naples, less of romantic wonder than Venice, never fails to kindle an undying love.

Oh! Florence! with the Tuscan fields and hills,
And famous Arno fed with all their rills,
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!

The well-known words of Coleridge awaken a universal echo. The more we know of the cities of Italy—their past associations and their present beauty,—the more clearly we understand why Florence should shine out resplendent as the—

. . . brightest star of star-bright Italy.

Her history is less vast and more personal than that of Rome, so that the mind more easily grasps it; her beauty gleams less

vividly upon the eye than that of Naples, but it creeps more surely into the heart; her lovely setting of wooded hills and flowers-strewn fields may be less unusual than the network of waterways that Venice plants in the midst of the sea, but its charm is an enduring one and the pleasure it gives can never satiate.

If Florence is to be rightly understood, it is necessary, without doubt, to study her history and to acquire a store of information as to her builders and makers, her poets and painters; but names and dates, dimensions and descriptions, are only the dry bones of knowledge: they must be clothed with insight and with sympathy before life can be breathed into them. The past, that is to say, must not be so much studied as lived in, and those who come to Florence need a power that shall enable them to see the city itself through its works of art, its buildings and its historical associations—to see it steadily and see it whole, as Matthew Arnold says that life was seen by Sophocles.

Florence, for only too many, is nothing more than a museum, or an art gallery, in which numbers of rare and beautiful objects are to be found. Such a conception makes impossible any appreciation of continuous historic and civic life. To others, Florence is merely a place in which some one figure, or group of figures, once lived. To these again is wanting that sense of connection without which the city can never be understood, for he who reverences Savonarola often thinks lightly of Dante, and he who loves Dante pays little heed to Lorenzo the Magnificent.

To grasp the spirit of Florence the mind must be fixed upon the city far more than upon any of its detailed beauties of art and architecture; and to form a just estimate of any one of the sons of Florence he must be considered not merely as an individual, but in relation to all the rest. The bare bones of fact are not enough for such a revelation: dreams of her past history and her present beauty must be allowed to take possession of the mind before she will unlock the secrets that lie folded in her breast. Some there are who tread her streets and gaze upon her wonders who yet never see her—who go away from her as ignorant as they came; but those who love her are never be-

trayed by her—can never be betrayed—and having once given herself she remains an eternal possession of the soul.

But this intimate possession cannot be attained by the indolent or self-sufficient. In a quaint old book by James Howell published in the year 1642—*Instructions for Forreine Travell*—there is a shrewd remark with reference to the mental equipment necessary if the traveller is to reap the full advantage of his journeys:—

Although one should reade all the Topographers that ever writ of, or anatomiz'd a Town or Country, and mingle Discourse with the most exact observers of the Government thereof, and labour to drawe and draine out of them all they possibly know or can remember, yet one's owne ocular view and personal observation will still find out something new and unpointed at by any other.

But this great gain, he says, is possible only to those who come in a spirit of appreciation, who believe with him that Italy is a "great limbique of working braines . . . the nurse of Policy, Learning, Musique, Architecture and Limning, with other Perfections." If the traveller thus approaches her with a mind pre-disposed to love and reverence, he will find his spirit "subtilized by coalition" with her.

No instructions for travellers could be better than these, and it is interesting to compare them with some others issued more than a century later. In *The Florence Miscellany*, printed in Florence in 1785, may be found the solemn warning addressed to Mrs. Piozzi on the dangers of a visit to Italy—a warning which was once believed to have been written by Dr. Johnson, but is now attributed to her friend, Mr. Parsons. After urging her to be on her guard against the pitfalls of vice that will surround her path on such a perilous journey, the moralist continues:—

Nor can the manners, falsely called refined,
Obtain the sanction of your chaster mind:
A British Female, nursed in Virtue's lore
And early taught her maxims to adore.

Having risked the contamination of her morals and manners, she should, he concedes, see something of the renowned wonders of Italy:—

Yet ere you from Italia's plains depart,
Go, view the monuments of ancient Art,
Whate'er adorns famed Arno's flowery side,
Or Tiber's waves reflect with classic pride;
And all you see, to judge what's good and fair,
With the pure models in your breast compare.
If then a once loved friend may dare advise,
Short be thy stay beneath those Southern skies.

The idea of the complacent British Female setting up her own gifts and graces as the standard of excellence and then hurrying away lest those gifts and graces should be sullied by contact with foreign life, is delightful; but unfortunately she has her present-day counterpart in those who set out on their travels with minds so full of preconceived ideas that they are incapable of receiving any new impressions.

Mrs. Piozzi, we may feel assured, never felt the spell of Florence, any more that it can have been felt by the Countess of Pomfret, Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline, wife of George II, who spent a year in the Palazzo Ridolfo, once the house of Bianca Capella, and occupied herself with reflecting how far superior she was to its former inhabitant:—

Armed with these thoughts I take my destined way,
Return contented and contented stay;
Rise with the sun and breathe the morning air,
Or to the bay-tree shade at noon repair;
Walk and reflect within the conscious grove
Where fair Bianca fed unlawful love,
What different cares its different owners prove.

But to those who can forget the models of excellence in their own breasts and disarm their minds of such complacent thoughts, Florence will reveal herself in all her wonder, as Shelley describes her:—

O foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendour;
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story
As ocean its wreckt fanes, severe yet tender:—
The light-invested Angel, Poesy,
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught
By loftiest meditations; marble knew
The sculptor's fearless soul—and as he wrought
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.³

³ Percy Bysshe Shelley: *Marengi*, stanzas 7, 8.

This wealth of historical association, of painting and of sculpture, is not, however, the only charm of Florence. Here, as in few other cities, art and nature go hand in hand, and that traveller is fortunate who sees Florence for the first time in spring, when the flowers that give her her name—rose and lily, iris and narcissus, syringa and heliotrope—are taking possession of her fields and gardens like an invading army, when sweet whispers run through the pulses of the earth and the air is aglow with life. Spring comes to our northern nations as a divine surprise, and each year we greet her with the same rapture of astonishment; but to Italy she comes as a child to the dwelling-place of her fathers: her mood is a radiant one, she gives with both hands, flinging her gifts broadcast, and the spirit of joy riots over the land.

Swinburne has put that triumph of joy into his *Spring in Tuscany*:—

Rose-red lilies that bloom on the banner;
 Rose-cheeked gardens that revel in spring;
 Rose-mouthed acacias that laugh as they climb,
 Like plumes for a queen's hand fashioned to fan her
 With wind more soft than a wild dove's wing,
 What do they sing in the spring of their time?

If this be the rose that the world hears singing,
 Soft in the soft night, loud in the day,
 Songs for the fireflies to dance as they hear;
 If that be the song of the nightingale, springing
 Forth in the form of a rose in May,
 What do they say of the way of the year?

What of the way of the world gone Maying,
 What of the work of the buds in the bowers,
 What of the will of the wind on the wall,
 Fluttering the wall-flowers, sighing and playing,
 Shrinking again as a bird that cowers,
 Thinking of hours when the flowers have to fall?

Out of the throats of the loud birds showering,
 Out of the folds where the flag-lilies leap,
 Out of the mouths of the roses stirred,
 Out of the herbs on the walls re-flowering,
 Out of the heights where the sheer snows sleep,
 Out of the deep and the steep, one word.

One from the lips of the lily-flames leaping,
 The glad red lilies that burn in our sight,

The great live lilies for standard and crown;
One from the steeps where the pines stand sleeping,
One from the deep land, one from the height,
One from the light and the might of the town.

For a first view of Florence there is no place to be compared with the Piazzale Michelangelo, for the city is not too far removed to be clearly seen, yet it is set free from bewildering details and is, as it were, a little withdrawn, so that those who look may see how it lies among the hills as a jewel lies in its setting. Monte Senario rises on one side, bare and bleak, and far away in the distance loom the magic heights of Vallombrosa. Nearer home lies the village of Settignano—rich with memories of Michelangelo—and immemorial Fiesole, her length of convent wall across the way, as Browning saw it when he trod the streets of Florence with Andrea del Sarto and felt the chill of autumn creep over his life.

Perhaps of all the days a Florentine spring can know, there is none so beautiful as a day of warm, rain-washed air, when the sun gleams out at evening from the curtained horizon, bathing the world in hues of rose and opal, and wreathing the city in a light veil of mist that the sun has drawn up, not only from the river, but from the dripping roofs and trees. No sound ascends from the distant streets to break the spell, no echo of creaking carts, of beating horse-hoofs, or of rushing motor-cars; nothing but the soft swell and fall of the bells as the Angelus rings out from a hundred towers. The great dome of the Cathedral overshadows the neighboring buildings, and Giotto's glorious Campanile springs up beside it towards the sky. Here is the square turret of the Palazzo Vecchio and there the perforated belfry of Santo Spirito, all standing out against the glow of the sky as the rays of the sinking sun light up the distant hills and gleam on the waves of the river, flowing down through the city. The Arno may be turgid and angry-looking sometimes in winter, languid and muddy-hued sometimes in summer; but in spring it is a personification of life and light as it speeds past the wooded banks of the Cascine, and away through the level plains to Pisa—Pisa, whom the sea once loved and held in its embrace, but who is now a deserted

bride, mourning for her lover amidst the fading remnants of her bygone splendor.

Standing here on the terrace of the Piazzale, with Michelangelo's fortifications close at hand and the Ponte alle Grazie—most ancient of Arno's bridges—spanning the river below, it is not difficult to dream oneself back into the past. That gaily dressed little knot of peasant women beside the massive Porta San Niccolò, with their market-baskets on their arms, might be discussing the latest startling prophecy of Savonarola; that flowing robe and low-dropped cowl might well conceal the form of the great preacher himself; that cavalcade of mules with the scarlet tassels and the jingling bells might be coming into the city with a load of oil and wine from the farms of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

It is true that the hill of San Miniato wears a very different aspect now from the wild and rugged beauty that characterized it in the days of old; but this is not altogether a matter for regret, for the skill of the engineer and the landscape-gardener have made accessible to all—

That steep upon whose brow the chapel stands,
as Dante calls it, and there are few who would wish to blot out the fair scene that slopes away from the steps of the church. The many-shaded green of the tree-lined roads is broken with splashes of splendid color, as climbing flowers of crimson, gold and purple, twine their arms about the branches and hang among the leaves, and from the doors of San Salvatore, the cypresses of the Monte alle Croci lead down to the narrow streets below, their solemn gloom made radiant with roses and misted with purple irises.

The poet Rogers felt the spell of Florence as keenly as Swinburne, but there is one expression in his well-known description that is somewhat misleading:—

Of all the fairest cities of the earth
None is so fair as Florence. 'Tis a gem
Of purest ray; and what a light broke forth,
When it emerged from darkness! Search within,
Without; all is enchantment! 'Tis the Past
Contending with the Present; and in turn
Each has the mastery.⁴

⁴ Samuel Rogers: *Florence*.

Had he employed the word *commingling* in place of *contending*, he would have given a truer explanation of the enchantment of the city: the one does not master the other, the storied Past lives in the beauty of the Present—the beauty of the Present is eloquent of the story of the Past.

And no scene could be more completely typical of that commingling, of that perfect union from which the charm of Florence is born, for it was on the steep path of the Monte alle Croci that on the morning of Good Friday, almost a thousand years ago, the young lord Gian Gualberto met the murderer of his brother Hugo and would have taken vengeance upon him if he had not held out his arms in the form of a cross and begged for mercy in the name of Him who on that day gave His life for the sin of the world.

The plea was accepted, and leading his forgiven enemy by the hand, Gian Gualberto went back up the hill to the church of San Miniato, where, as they stood before the Crucifix, the legend tells that the Sacred Figure inclined its head towards the young noble in recognition of his Christian act—a miracle that so impressed him that he left his father's house to enter the religious life and founded a monastery on the heights of Vallombrosa.

The church of San Miniato may well be the first to be visited in Florence, for it dates back to the far distant days of the city. The martyr whom it commemorates, St. Miniatus, was a young Armenian prince, whom the emperor Decius (A. D. 250) put to a cruel death during his first persecution of the Christians. His memory was honored in Florence by the erection of a church at a date which cannot now be fixed, but there are records which show that St. Frediano, Bishop of Lucca in the sixth century, made a yearly journey to Florence that he might offer his devotions before the shrine of the martyr. The first stone of the present church was laid by Hildebrand, Bishop of Florence, some thousand years ago, when the old chroniclers tell us that he came up from the city accompanied by the proud emperor Henry II, and followed by a stately procession of gaily dressed courtiers and chanting choirs.

To pass from the warmth and light of the glowing atmosphere outside into the chill shadow of the church is depressing for the moment, but how quickly is the feeling forgotten as the story of the past crowds back upon the mind; lovely are the interlaced mosaics of the floor, lovely the marble screen that divides nave from choir, lovely the fretted roof and the richly decorated arches; and beneath it all, through it all, rises the vision of the past—the zeal, the faith and the devotion expressed in the work of men's hands.

And yet, even in this shrine of consecrated effort, there is a reminder that devotion itself may be a mask for self-aggrandizement. It is not St. Miniatus who claims recognition, for although all this glory of sculptured marble and exquisite mosaic commemorates his pure life and heroic death, he is depicted on the vault of the Tribune in the act of offering up his crown to One more holy and more worthy of worship than himself. Although he, at least, laid no claim to beatitude, self-effacement is a grace not possessed by all, and the Altar of the Crucifixion designed by Michelozzo in 1446, at the command of Piero de' Medici, bears upon it the device of that proud family with its defiant motto ringing a challenge to chance and change—*Semper*.

Always! But where are the Medici now? And how little did Piero, son of Cosimo, *Pater Patriae*, imagine that his name would be handed down to future ages with no distinguishing epithet but that of the disease which crippled him—*Piero il gottoso*. The Tabernacle that he caused to be so richly wrought by the great architect and sculptor was intended to be the final resting-place of the wonder-working crucifix that had brought about Gian Gualberto's conversion four hundred years before; but the *Semper* fails of its effect there, too, for a later Cosimo—the first Grand Duke—allowed the treasure to be snatched from its shrine and carried in triumph to the church of Santa Trinità. The Tabernacle stands there still, but it is empty—empty as the boast of poor gouty Piero.

Yet surely in this church, hallowed with the memories of more than a thousand years, the vanity of human designs and desires need not trouble the mind. There is a *Semper* that

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earthly failure cannot touch, and that truth is exemplified in the chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal, for although the young prince James, nephew of Alphonso, king of Portugal, whom it commemorates, died in the flower of his age as he passed through Florence on his way to Germany as ambassador in 1454, the high hopes that were buried in his tomb live again in the fragrance of his memory. "He lived in the flesh as if he were free of it," says Vespasiano Bisticci, in his *Vite di Uomini Illustre del Secolo XV*; "his was rather the life of an angel than of a man and his death was holy as his life had been."

The beauty and purity of that life are embodied in the exquisite figure on the tomb, carved in marble by Rossellino. Moderation, Prudence, Strength and Chastity are the Virtues emblazoned above his head, and although there is something as touching and as tender in the sleeping face as in that of the dead Warrior at Ravenna, there is no trace of weakness:—

His strength was as the strength of ten
Because his heart was pure.

And with that strength was mingled a gleam of hope: the Warrior at Ravenna sleeps as if he had no wish to wake again. The fight has been long, and now that Death has vanquished him he lies calm and relaxed in peaceful oblivion; but the genius of Rossellino has touched the slumber of the young cardinal with life, a vision of glory seems to shine beneath his closed eyelids, and although no defiant *Semper* cries its challenge from his tomb, it is instinct with the spirit of life.

There is more than one way of returning to the city from the church of San Miniato. The traveller may pass by the tree-shaded road that winds slowly down the hill until it lands him at the ancient Porta Romana; or he may descend the Monte alle Croci to the network of streets below; or go by the modern flights of steps that lead to the Porta San Niccolò, where Michelangelo once lay hidden from his enemies. By whichever way he retraces his steps, the spell of Florence will be upon him—the spell of a city that has found the key to the *Semper* of the Medici:—

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety.

Far from withering her, Age inspires her with an ever-growing vitality, and familiarity only brings fresh aspects of her unending fascination into view. The mingling of Past and Present—this is the secret of her spell, the secret which Owen Meredith divines in his poem, *An Evening in Tuscany*:—

Look down now, o'er the city,
Sleeping soft among the hills—
Our dear Florence! That great Pitti
With its stately shadow fills
Half the town up, its unwinking
Cold white windows, as they glare
Down the long streets, set one thinking
Of the old Dukes who lived there;
For one knows them, those strange men, so—
Subtle brains and iron thews!
There, the gardens of Lorenzo—
The long cypress avenues—
Creep up slow the stately hillside
Where the merry loungers are.
But far more I love this still side—
The blue plain you see so far!
Where the shore of bright white villas
Leaves off faint, and faint the stream
Creeps from bridge to bridge as still as
Some hushed gladness in a dream.

MARY BRADFORD WHITING.

Ramsgate, England.

NIETZSCHE AND WAGNER

The Nietzsche and Wagner drama played itself out in three acts: the act of self-surrendering devotion; the act of temptation; and the act of victorious enfranchisement. I shall take these three periods of Nietzsche's experience in their order.

Nietzsche's admiration for Wagner goes back to the years of his youth. He was an uncompromising classicist until he reached the age of fifteen. This must have been due, in part, to the women who brought him up. He was an exclusive admirer of Mozart and Haydn, Schubert and Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Bach; and he was a decided scorner of what he called "the music of the future—of a Liszt or a Berlioz." So he began, but he finished by learning to enjoy the work of Wagner, and his admiration turned into enthusiasm when he heard *Tristan und Isolde*. "From the moment that *Tristan* was arranged for the piano I was a Wagnerite," he declares (1888), in speaking of the memories of his youth. The autumn holidays of 1862 were spent by him and a friend in playing this arrangement for the piano from morning till night. "Wonderfully beautiful!", he said to his sister. "Don't you think so?" "No," she replied. Their powerful voices often reminded her, she afterwards wrote, "of the howling of wolves." Such was the beginning of the Wagnerian experience of Nietzsche when he was a schoolboy at Pforta.

In 1868 Nietzsche was introduced to Wagner, when the master was staying with his relatives at Leipzig. Wagner's sister there was the wife of Professor Brockhaus. Nietzsche had already been hearing Wagner's music at concerts.

The reader will be interested in this letter written by Nietzsche to his friend Rohde, October, 1868:—

This evening I was at the Euterpe Society, which has started its winter concerts, and I refreshed myself with the prelude to *Tristan und Isolde* as well as the overture to the *Meistersinger*. I cannot get myself to regard this music coldly and critically; every tissue and every nerve vibrate in me, and for a long time I have not had such an enduring feeling of rapture as when listening to the last-mentioned

overture. My permanent seat as a subscriber is surrounded by critical spirits; immediately in front of me there sits Bernsdorff, the abomination I have spoken to you about; on my left Dr. Paul, the present hero of the *Tageblatt*; two places to the right of me is my friend Stede, who grinds out musical opinions for *Brendel's Musical Journal*. It is a thorny corner, and when we four all shake our heads together, it means disaster.

I must quote a scrap from another letter to Rohde:—

I have one woman more particularly in view, of whom wonderful things have been told me; she is the wife of Professor Brockhaus and a sister of Richard Wagner's; and my friend Windisch, who has just now called upon me, gave me a surprising account of her capacities. What pleased me about all this is that it confirms Schopenhauer's theory of heredity. Wagner's other sister, who was formerly an actress in Dresden, is also said to have been a very distinguished woman.

Then came Nietzsche's visit to the Brockhaus home. He describes his feelings to Rohde in still another letter, November 9, 1868:—

When I reached home yesterday I found a card addressed to me with this note upon it: "Do you wish to make the acquaintance of Richard Wagner? If so, meet me at a quarter to four in the Thearte Café. Windisch." This news, I can assure you, so turned my head that I quite forgot what I was doing before it came, and was thoroughly bewildered.

To make a long story short, Wagner did not appear, as fate would have it, but in a few days Nietzsche did meet Wagner and wrote thus to Rohde:—

Now let me give you a brief account of what happened that evening: really, the joys experienced were of such a rare and stimulating nature that even to-day I am not back in my old humdrum existence again, but can think of nothing better to do than to come to you, my dear friend, and tell you these wonderful tidings. Wagner played to us before and after supper, and got through every one of the more important passages of the *Meistersinger*. He imitated all the voices and was in very high spirits; he is, by the by, an extraordinarily active and fiery man. He speaks very

quickly, shows considerable wit, and can make a private company of the sort assembled on that evening quite jolly. I managed to have a somewhat lengthy talk with him about Schopenhauer. Oh, you will understand what a joy it was for me to hear him speak with such indescribable warmth of our master,—what a lot he owed to him, how he was the only philosopher who had recognized the essence of music! Then he inquired as to how the professors were disposed towards him; laughed a good deal at the Philosophers' Congress at Prague, and spoke of the "philosophical journeymen." . . . At the close of the evening he . . . kindly asked me to visit him in order that we might have some music and philosophy together.

Thus began Nietzsche's personal acquaintance with Richard Wagner, the strongest influence that was ever exercised over him. For a decade since the publication of von Bülow's piano arrangement of *Tristan und Isolde* he had been a passionate admirer of Wagner's music, even though he had already rejected *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, and *Die Walküre*. But when Wagner, the man, came before him, with all the fascination of his strong will, Nietzsche felt at once that he was in the presence of a person who, in his volitional power, was of all his contemporaries most like himself. Nietzsche was the first person who, with one enthusiastic impulse, loved both Schopenhauer and Wagner, and the first of that band of young men, young Germany, who wrote the two names, Schopenhauer and Wagner, side by side, upon their banner.

Let me now attempt to unroll one of the most memorable dramas in the history of friendship and of genius, and later to disclose and examine the root of it all philosophically in character and in life.

In 1869 Nietzsche was a professor of philology at Bâle. During the years of his professorship there, from 1869 until 1876, he was on terms of the closest intimacy with Wagner and his wife, Frau Cosima. He frequently visited them in their retreat at Tribschen, and these visits remained the sweetest and most beautiful memories of Nietzsche's, and indeed of Wagner's, career. The reader will find illuminating a fragment from another letter of Nietzsche to Baron von Gersdorff, August, 1869:—

In addition to this I have found a man who has revealed to me, as no other man could, the image of that which Schopenhauer calls "the genius", and who is thoroughly permeated by that wonderfully profound philosophy. This man is no other than Richard Wagner, about whom you need not take for granted any opinion which you may find in the press or the writings of musical experts, etc. *No one* can know him or judge him, because the whole world stands upon a basis different from his, and is not familiar with his atmosphere. He is ruled by such an absolute knowledge of ideality, by such profound and touching humanity, and by such a lofty and serious interest in life, that at his side I feel in the presence of the divine.

Halcyon, idyllic Tribschen days were these for Nietzsche and Wagner—days that were the great noontide of their friendship. Tribschen, beautifully situated at the foot of Mount Pilatus, was in itself an abode of happiness, a haven of refuge, the island of the blessed, to Nietzsche. Here his ideal of friendship seemed to become realized, and he believed in the elevating power of friendship. Perhaps these delightful days, when each of the two lonely, isolated and misunderstood men warmed his life at the other's hearthside suggested Nietzsche's poem on friendship:—

Hail, thou friendship
Of my highest longing,
Earliest red of morning!
Endless often
Seemed the path, and night to me,
All things living
Hateful without aim!
Now will I live doubly,
When in thine eyes I have
Beheld victory and dawn:
Thou dearest Goddess!

By-the-by [he writes Erwin Rohde], I also have my Italy, just as you have; the one difference being that the only time I can keep for enjoying it consists of my Saturdays and Sundays. This Italy is called Tribschen, and I am already quite at home there.

Meanwhile Wagner was at work on the composition of *Siegfried*, and dreaming his big dream of Bayreuth, where the gigantic Nibelung drama in its unique style was to be elaborated

to the German people, and later to all the world. Meanwhile, also, Nietzsche read the proof of Wagner's autobiography, meant only for a few friends, and entered into elevated conversation with the master. And meanwhile both were cherishing a common world-view, the Schopenhauerean doctrine of redemption, in which art plays so important a rôle. Wagner was, then, to Nietzsche, not only a fatherly friend, an adored artist, but the living embodiment of the philosophic spirit.

But the question arose (it was a way of Wagner's to see that it should arise): How could Nietzsche serve Wagner and Wagner's ambition? Nietzsche had already converted his friends Rohde and Gersdorff to Wagner's cause, as he had earlier won them over to Schopenhauer, but this conversion was more an outflow of friendly feeling than an act in the service of the Wagnerian mission. To work for Wagner, as he and no other could do, not as a noisy partisan propagandist, not as an unfree expounder of Wagner's opera, but as a new and powerful colleague, he had to employ his scholarship, his profound absorption in classic antiquity, in a word, his *philology*. The sun of Nietzsche's philology must shine with a radiant illumination upon the philosophic art works of Richard Wagner. Nietzsche's learning must serve Wagner's genius.

Just at this point, evidently, Wagner abandons a disinterested, unselfish friendship. He feels the necessity of making the conquest of his young partisan more and more complete. Accordingly, he writes Nietzsche this self-revealing, significant letter:—

It is indeed a good thing to have such a correspondence as ours. I have at present nobody with whom I can talk things over as seriously as I can with you, my one friend. You might take from my shoulders much, even half of my life's business. You see on what a miserable footing I am with philology, and what a good thing it is that you are in the same position as to music. Now you will please remain a philologist in order to be led by music. I am in earnest about what I am saying. I beg you to show the benefit of philology and thus help me to bring about the great renaissance.

It should be added, in this connection, that on Nietzsche's side his self-surrendering devotion does not seem to have been

without struggle; we are never to forget his power of critical penetration and his sagacity. Even now, when most devoted, he perceived some of the weak points in Wagner's compositions, although he never alluded to them publicly. But the response, the echo, which Wagner's letter of exaction awoke in the heart of twenty-five-year-old Nietzsche, can readily be imagined. It was as if the very spirit of philosophy itself spoke to him and unveiled to him his mission. Nietzsche conceived his first philosophic work, if we may designate it a work inspired entirely by the philosophic impulse; he himself would have called it a centaur, an expression he was wont to use when speaking of works in which the artistic, metaphysical, and philological ways of looking at things were intertwined. The specific work in question was *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music*, elaborated from the autumn of 1869 until November, 1871, in a tranquil and peaceful time for Nietzsche, but also in months of war service and illness. The work was dedicated to Richard Wagner, *Meinem erhabenen Vorkämpfer*, and flung a bridge between the Wagnerian art and the Greek drama. It was such a cherishing of friendship as no other could offer to a master! It was a unique dedication,—loyalty to one's own self, loyalty to a friend, loyalty to the inner object of calling, the beloved Hellenism. Reverentially on New Year's Day, 1872, Nietzsche wrote the Goethe verse:—

Schaff, das Tagwerk meiner Hände,
Grosser Geist, dass ich's Vollende!

The effect of the book upon the Wagner family was overpowering. It was born entirely from the Wagnerian world-view. It disclosed an understanding for that world-view from a new side, light falling from the Greek tragedy on the Wagnerian, and from the latter on the former. Interesting letters full of admiration came pouring from Liszt, from von Bülow, and from society women who were indefatigable and, of course, competitive, in serving Wagner's cause.

But the professional philologists ignored the book. Nietzsche had made antiquity a living thing. An uncanny seriousness of life stared at them out of the book. The artistic-philosophic

treatment broke over the fence of academic convention. Whole new problems were posed for the scholars, who thought that they had settled everything already. So the philologists either observed a significant silence, or else condemned the work.

Nietzsche's old patron, Professor Ritschl, after he had received a presentation copy, wrote to his former favorite:—

You cannot complain much of me when I, the Alexandrine and scholar, oppose myself to a depreciation of perception and the intellect, and to a demand that one should see in art, and in art alone, the force which is to reform, redeem and free the world.

Nevertheless, the untiring vigor, the pulsing life in Nietzsche's book, which, with the sunlight of realities, shocked the men who studied in seclusion, and dazzled eyes spoilt by reading mouldering Greek documents, of course entranced Wagner and his followers. They recognized the immense service which had been rendered to Wagner's art by this æsthetic, philological essay, in which Nietzsche's philosophical instinct led him to grope his way along a new path. "I have never yet read a finer book than yours! It is all magnificent!", Wagner wrote to his ardent apostle and defender. Similarly also wrote Frau Cosima.

The year 1872 saw many events in the life of Nietzsche. Bülow visited him, liked the book and the author, but would not allow Nietzsche to compose music. The progress of the scheme of Bayreuth made Wagner's presence there unavoidable, and in April, 1872, Tribschen days came to an end and the idyll became an epic. "Tribschen has now ceased to exist," wrote Nietzsche. "We walked about as amid ruins of the past. . . . Ah! it was desperate!"

In May Nietzsche, Rohde and von Gersdorff stayed a few days in Bayreuth, when the foundation-stone of the theatre was laid. Here Nietzsche met the prominent Wagnerians, Baroness von Schleinitz, Countess Dönhoff, and especially Fräulein Malvida von Meysenbug, with whom he enjoyed a long friendship. "Those days", writes Nietzsche, "were simply wonderful, and the air was pregnant with something unutterable, something fraught with promise."

In June Nietzsche was in Munich with the Fräulein, hearing *Tristan und Isolde*, as conducted by Hans von Bülow. It was this same month that brought the first attack from the camp of the much-offended philology against her faithless follower Nietzsche, and against *The Birth of Tragedy*, the attack of the philologist von Wilamowitz, who abominated the amateur philosophy of Nietzsche and who aroused and pursued a violent polemic against him. Nietzsche's friends, Wagner included, defended him, for he himself considered self-defence beneath him. Rohde used cudgel and club and won a brilliant victory for Nietzsche. For all that, however, Nietzsche became outlawed and anathematized as a philologist. Students were advised to keep out of his classes: he had two students to whom he could lecture on rhetoric! 'Stop dabbling in æsthetics and philosophy!' his colleagues demanded. 'Keep to philology and let music alone!'

At this time, however, Nietzsche was slowly discovering the philosopher in himself. The philologist disappeared into the background. Philosophical instinct was too strong to be chained to the treadmill of a profession,—a professorship is not so bad if it were not for the teaching! Nothing could stop this instinct. Indestructible, in defiance of circumstances, it steered towards a predestined goal. Even his old idols—Schopenhauer and Wagner—were soon forsaken, after they had fulfilled their educational mission.

The Birth of Tragedy, which idolized and glorified his friend Wagner, having been written and published, Nietzsche, even then, almost imperceptibly, began to undergo a great change in his attitude towards him. It is important to remember what Nietzsche tells us in one of his prefaces, namely, that the great number of his writings express, not the feelings he experienced at the time he wrote them down, but the feelings already lived, which had given place in him to new ideas. This is why *Schopenhauer as Educator* is dated at a time when Nietzsche no longer believed in either Schopenhauer or pessimism. This is why *Richard Wagner at Bayreuth* was at bottom, to quote Nietzsche's fine sad words,—

an acknowledgment of gratitude rendered to a moment of my past, to the beautiful period of a calm sea—and the most

dangerous also of my existence . . . it was in reality a rupture, a farewell.¹

While, then, the period of self-surrendering devotion was drawing to its close, the old affection and the enthusiasm of the æsthetic again celebrated a triumph in the book, *Richard Wagner at Bayreuth*, but probably this drop-scene was played contrary to the instincts and convictions of Nietzsche.

But I am anticipating my story. Wagner, when his friendship with Nietzsche was at high tide, wrote to him: "After my wife, you are the only joy life has brought." And again: "I swear to God, Nietzsche, you are the only one who knows what I strive for." This was fanaticism of friendship to which Nietzsche reacted with self-surrendering tenderness, abandoning a trip to Greece with Mendelssohn's son because it would give offence to Wagner. He even sought counsel as to how he might avoid offending Wagner when the latter was irritable. The friendship approaches high tide; the billows clamber up among the rocks, and cover them; but they cannot stay,—soon they go back to the sea, and the rocks appear, scarred and broken. It is low tide now!

Now follows the act of temptation. What introduced it? What sort of temptation could there be in such a relationship? Did the academic calling demand the release of the disciple from the bonds of the artist? Was the tempter vanity, or was it envy, which whispered to the young thinker: 'You are too big to be the disciple of another, even of the greatest genius; break away, achieve the highest glory of a creator on your own account!'? Or, was it the soul of a Philistine which cried: 'Come down from the summit; live in the valley more happily, more tranquilly!'? No, nothing of all this; the temptation lay in exactly the opposite direction. *Not to apostatize from Wagner, but to be true to himself*—that was Nietzsche's temptation. It was as this that Nietzsche perceived it. By 'tempter' we are wont to understand that principle which stimulates and misguides us to do wrong, to act counter to our better selves. Could this evil principle be present in our loyalty to our best friend? It could,

¹ *Human, All-too-Human*, II, Preface, § 1.

indeed, if loyalty to friend be purchased only with the apostasy from something higher, if loyalty to something higher can be purchased only with apostasy to friend! Then loyalty to friend is disloyalty to the Socratic demon (*daimonion*) in our breast, is, in fact, temptation. It is in this shape that the tempter appears here. In view of what we already know, it need not be said that there could be for Nietzsche only one higher thing than loyalty to the master, and that this one higher thing was loyalty to the philosophic spirit, the *daimonion* of Socrates, in Nietzsche's own breast. But was not Wagner the incarnation of this philosophic spirit for Nietzsche, as, earlier, Schopenhauer was? Yes, *was*,—but not now: Wagner has ceased to represent that spirit. Just because Nietzsche was loyal only to the philosophic spirit in Wagner, just because Wagner was to him only the phenomenalizing, the objectivizing of that spirit, Nietzsche would have broken loyalty in this profoundest sense even to Wagner if he had maintained loyalty to him in the more superficial sense. Then would he have been loyal not to *friend* Wagner, but to the despiritualized shell, to an atomic complex. *Friend* Wagner was identically philosophic *spirit* Wagner. Disavowing the spirit, then, was disowning the friend! The conflict was terrible, especially terrible for so tender, so adoring, so grateful a nature as Nietzsche's. But the Wagnerian kingdom of this world, the Wagnerian promise that the angels of high society would see that poor Nietzsche would not dash his feet against a stone, the Wagnerian offer to make pessimistic stones into the bread of heaven,—these did not avail Nietzsche with his new demon, as they did not avail an earlier Nietzsche. And so both Nietzsches said: "Get thee behind me, Satan!" And yet we see him, in this second act, vibrating back and forth between two poles: the spirit of Bayreuth and the spirit of Philosophy. It is the old eternal struggle between Nirvana and Messiah, between resignation and *sursum corda*, between opportunism and principle, between "the flesh and the spirit," in the Pauline phrase. Nietzsche had his choice: Calvary or Bayreuth,—Calvary, rugged, naked, desolate, lonely, but keeping company with the sky; Bayreuth, sensuous, soft, sugary, mediæval, murky, mephitic. And Nietzsche chose Calvary and the stars!

Nietzsche's fully conscious defection from Wagner's world-view begins in 1874. At this time he first lays the axe at the root of the tree of Wagnerian art. From this time on his disintegrating criticism inwardly advances farther and farther. I do not now refer to the objective grounds which led Nietzsche to depart from Wagner, but, to make the necessity of the personal breach intelligible, the reader must be reminded that Nietzsche was gradually strengthened in the development of his *Thoughts out of Season* into an independent thinker, that his own original views brought him to the decisive point in his opposition to Wagner. Wagner's goals turned ever more away from life; Nietzsche's to life. Wagner believed that the deepest truths unveiled themselves only in art, in metaphysics, in religion; Nietzsche now held more and more that scientific thought, purged of artistic, metaphysical, and religious prepossessions, was the vehicle of truth. Wagner surrendered to mysticism, Nietzsche to positivism. These were days when Nietzsche's soul was alone and full of tumult. Opposites in him were in conflict. Views of his own coinage were in violent deviation from those of his masters. This explains the Wagner situation, explains why Nietzsche declined invitations from the Wagners, explains why Wagner's letters hurt him. It explains, on the other hand, his book, *Richard Wagner at Bayreuth*, wherein he assembled everything great that he had ever seen in the master, set him in a transfiguring light, sketched the ideal of an artist in dithyrambic tones—a radiant, vibrant, glowing picture—and called it Wagner! It was a great thank-offering to friendship, proffered with a bleeding heart. It was sent to the master shortly before the first Bayreuth festival, June, 1876. On July 12th, 1876, Wagner wrote Nietzsche: "Friend! Your book is prodigious! How did you learn to know me so well? Come quickly, and get accustomed to the new impressions by attending the rehearsals. Yours, R. W." This is the last letter that Wagner ever wrote to Nietzsche.

But Nietzsche went to Bayreuth. The last and severest temptation now confronted him. The first fruit on the Bayreuth tree, to which Nietzsche had contributed, was now plucked. He could not stay away. Perhaps he hoped for the return of the

old sincere days. But it was not to be. His Wagner ideal he had not discovered in Wagner, but had created out of his own soul. He was the victim of an illusion, an error. His doubt was confirmed. The catastrophe broke upon him. After the first rehearsal Nietzsche left the place, and buried himself for ten days in Klingenberg, deep in Bohemian forests. Here the great soul redeemed himself to himself, and to his inner veraciousness. Loyal to his philosophic spirit, he wrote *The Ploughshare*, the first elements of a new, free work.

But the beckon of Bayreuth was stronger for a last moment than the ban of his own thoughts. Once again he yielded to temptation and went suddenly back to Bayreuth. But this time, it was only an outer, not an inner return. Body, not soul, went. We shall never comprehend how deeply Nietzsche suffered during these weeks. It can be understood only by him whose most personal suffering and joy spring from his relation to an impersonal ideal.

Suddenly, in the midst of the festival, sick of its untruthfulness and obscurity, despite the fact that he had fallen in love there with an exceptionally fascinating and charming Parisienne, who, unfortunately, was already married, Nietzsche left Bayreuth finally, never to return. "The greatest event in my life," Nietzsche writes later, "was a recovery. Wagner was only one of my diseases." The temptation was now ended. The eagle had grown his wings.

We have now come to the third act: Nietzsche's victorious emancipation. From the first, he had differed from Schopenhauer on some essential points of doctrine. Later, he doubted the fundamental hypotheses of Schopenhauer's entire system, the attributes which Schopenhauer recognizes in the will, the will as essence of the world, the existence of a thing-in-itself. Soon he brushed aside the pessimistic conclusions of Schopenhauer's system: philosophic resignation and nihilism. On Wagner his judgment was not less free. He found that in the *Walküre* serious defects must be weighed against marvellous beauty. To explain the intervention of the choir in Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, he outlined a theory² which entirely contra-

²*The Birth of Tragedy*, § 17.

dicted that of Wagner. On another occasion he opposed to the Wagnerian conception of musical drama a radically different conception. Later, he noted what was immoderate in Wagner's gifts and character, and said that Bach and Beethoven showed "purer nature". He passed severe judgments upon Wagner's political life, on his relations with the revolutionists and the King of Bavaria, and on his anti-semitism. He came to have significant doubts as to Wagner's value, not as an 'integral' artist, but as a specialist: *i.e.*, as a musician, poet, dramatist, and even as a thinker. Especially did Nietzsche discover in Wagner certain "reactionary elements": sympathy for the Middle Ages, for Christianity, for Buddhism, for love of the marvellous, and for German patriotism. He was sceptical as to the real influence that Wagner could exercise in Germany. In short, while affirming that he was grateful to Wagner's music for "the purest happiness I have ever enjoyed," he showed plainly that he was a heretic in matters of Wagnerism at the very time when in public he covered Wagner with laurels. How can this apparent duplicity be explained?

Nietzsche gives the key to his conduct in these words:—

At first we believe a particular philosopher. Then we say, if he errs in his manner of proving his statements, that these statements themselves are true nevertheless. Finally we conclude: his statements themselves are of indifferent value, but this man's nature is worth a hundred systems. As a teacher he may be wrong a thousand times; but his personality itself is always right, and it is that we should pay attention to. There is in a philosopher something that will never be in a philosophy; the cause of many philosophies,—genius.³

Here, then, is the evolution of Nietzsche's feelings with regard to Wagner and Schopenhauer. Nietzsche began by becoming enamored of their works; then his love and respect were directed to the personalities of the authors; finally, the moment came when he perceived that the differences which separated him from his masters were too great for him to be silent without exhibiting a want of sincerity towards himself; and, with deeply

³*Nachtrage über Schopenhauer.*

burdened heart, he obeyed the imperious exigencies of his conscience as thinker: he turned his criticism against his educators. He then saw that he had regarded them in a mistaken light. What he had sought for in them was not to understand them as they really were, but to understand himself by coming into touch with them. Instead of making himself like Schopenhauer and Wagner, as a disciple would do, he made Schopenhauer and Wagner after his own image and according to his own likeness, as a god does. Nietzsche's portrait of Schopenhauer gives, not Schopenhauer, but a Greek tragic philosopher. His portrait of Wagner gives, not Wagner, but the ideal figure of the Dionysian artist,—in a word, a kind of preliminary Zarathustra. Instead of painting his models, he described his own inward dreams, as he afterwards said in *Ecce Homo*.

At first he had accepted pessimism as a weapon against scientific optimism. The pessimistic criticism of the universe appeared to him to be the duty of every sincere man. On the other hand, he had never accepted without some reserve the nihilistic consequences which Schopenhauer drew from his premises: pity raised to a supreme virtue; the annihilation of the will to live proclaimed to be the final aim of existence. Absorbed at first in his battle against the Socratic culture of his age, Nietzsche did not take time to refute these nihilistic tendencies, or the Christian asceticism. But at length he saw that the nihilistic danger was as great as the optimistic danger, and that if the nineteenth century witnessed the flourishing of the mediocre and self-satisfied Philistine, it would be a century of decadence, tired of living, tired of suffering, aspiring to peace, to nothingness. A new problem then appeared to Nietzsche, a problem which never ceased to occupy his mind so long as he had a mind. What does this modern decadence consist of? What are the symptoms that characterize it, the signs that reveal it? What are the depth and breadth of the nihilistic evil? How can it be cured? Just as soon as the matter appeared to him in this light his judgments on Wagner and Schopenhauer were changed from top to bottom. His former allies in the war against optimism became his enemies in the war against pessimism, enemies dangerous in their fascination for

him and his generation. If he had not shaken off their influence in time, he would never have arrived at the full knowledge of his own philosophy of the Superman.

The first chiming note of Nietzsche's own philosophy begins in *Human, All-too-Human*, written when Wagner wrote *Parsifal*, so disgusting to Nietzsche. The period of victorious enfranchisement was ended. Nietzsche says of his own book:—

I thereby freed myself from all that did not belong to my nature; it is the monument of a crisis. It is the monument of a vigorous self-education, by which I put a sudden stop to all higher deceits, idealism, sense of beauty and the other womanlinesses which had infested me.

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TWO QUATRAINS

I. THE MOTHER

Wise with heart's wisdom and divinely mild,
Storing her soul with stars and birds and flowers,
She shapes the spirit of her little child
To secret patterns woven in holy hours.

—

II. WINTER VIGNETTE

Vague moons and misty valleys: ghostly cold
Enfolds the night, cold immobility;—
Deeply defeated life, weary and old,
Stares at the shrivelled leaf, the stricken tree.

G. H. C.

GALILEO WITH MILTON AT TORRE DEL GALLO

(Translated from J. S. Machar's *The Apostles*)

This tower they left me and the vault of heaven.
And so by day I gaze and gaze afar,
Into the world whereon I durst not step,
By night the starry realm from whence I drew
Renown unto my name, grief for my life.
But threatens now relentless destiny
To take e'en that. Mine eyes are waxing weak,
And if I gaze without the helping lens,
I do but see a glimmering silvery dust.
You, sire, are young, in life's heyday, a poet,
Son of the land which dragged its neck away
From grim and chilling clutches of the Church,—
O happy mortal! . . . Are we not myths to ourselves?
At least I haply to you? I plainly showed
What before me Copernicus had found,
What e'en the sages taught in ancient Greece,
That this, our world, has no firm fundament
In starry space, but on predestined path
In a year's course rotates about the sun,
During the which, like a deft dancing-girl,
Twists round its axis as it ranges on,—
And lo, then rose the Holy Church in wrath
And raged that I desired to shake belief
In truth of Holy Writ. Joshua, quoth 'a,
Spake once in war: Thou sun, shalt stay thy course
Up against Gibeon, whence 't is passing clear
Itself must needs be twisting round our earth.
Ah, can you know, young man, what folly is?
You know not, but I have quaffed it to the dregs.
When from their pulpits Jesuit Fathers spake
Homilies to the words of Holy Writ
As touching me: Why stand ye there, O men
Of Galilee, and gaze aloft?—when they
Bade me deny the truth I e'en had spoken,—
When unto Rome they summoned me to judgment—
And they who judged are versed perchance in Scripture

But never in those deathless, starry worlds,—
And when the Holy Father, wroth thereat,
(Not roused by mishap that befell the Scriptures
But deeming that I in my dialogue,
I play the zany with his affirmations
And quiz him in a sorry figure which
Is called *Simplicio* in that same tractate)—
When at this long and never-ending trial,
I, sick and vexed by questionings and dicta
Whereat 't is only possible to scoff,—
When at this trial I underwent perforce
Examen rigorosum, which is called
Torture in parlance of Holy Inquisition,—
(As though the deathless law can be o'ertuned
When at the end a tortured human worm
Spake: 'Nay, it turneth not.' I spake thus? Well,
I wot not.) Marvel not, O foreign sire,
At an old man, when he remembers, nay,
Remembers not, but clutches at his wounds,—
Wounds, quick and open—that words, that phrases surge
Burstingly from his lips, so wild, pell-mell
E'en as thou heardest. All in me is a-quiver,
Voice upon lips, and blood in veins, and soul
In body,—yet the earth doth turn and turned,
Aye, spite of Joshua; and it shall turn
Evermore, spite of Jesuits, and spite
Of Holy Inquisition. . . . And herein
The myth of me. . . .
Gaze heavenward, gaze!—
Yonder, yea, yonder is the dayspring of
My earthly dolours all . . . in yon white lustres,
Dayspring of all my woes, my prisoning
And earthly glory. . . . Weaker grows my gaze,
Yon realm shall vanish from me soon. . . . Perchance
Somewhere up yonder lies the solving of
That riddle which is dubbed the life of man.

PAUL SELVER.

London, England.

THE CLIMAX

This, so to speak, is "a song of degrees"—of more and less, of maxima and minima. Let us begin with an example or two. Touching with his gentle hand on the amenities of poets and critics, Swift, in an often misquoted passage, writes:—

The vermin only tease and pinch
Their foes superior by an inch.
So, naturalists observe, a flea
Has smaller fleas that on him prey;
And these have smaller fleas to bite 'em,
And so proceed *ad infinitum*.
Thus every poet, in his kind,
Is bit by him that comes behind.¹

This gracious sentiment has been imitated in *A Budget of Paradoxes*, by Augustus De Morgan. While Swift only descends, De Morgan also ascends the ladder:—

Great fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em,
And little fleas have lesser fleas, and so *ad infinitum*;
And the great fleas themselves, in turn, have greater fleas to go on;
While these have greater still, and greater still, and so on.²

But Swift caps the climax, and sets our minds at rest. The comic poet does this feat in his own way, sometimes by *climbing down* headfirst, with an unexpected plunge at the end. There is also an unspeakable depth or bathos that may be suggested and never attained; as there can be an endless ascent toward a true or false rhetorical glory. Or we may have ladder above ladder, staircase above staircase, from the infinitesimal to the infinite—and down again. Thus De Quincey pictures the telescoping visions of the Opium-Eater:—

Many years ago, when I was looking over Piranesi's *Antiquities of Rome*, Mr. Coleridge, who was standing by, described to me a set of plates by that artist, called his *Dreams*, and which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever—some of them (I describe only

¹ *On Poetry, A Rhapsody*, 1733, in Swift's *Poems*, ed. by Browning, i. 274.

² *A Budget*, etc., p. 377, as quoted in Bartlett: *Familiar Quotations*, 1911, p. 290.

from memory of Mr. Coleridge's account) representing vast Gothic halls, on the floor of which stood all sorts of engines and machinery, wheels, cables, pulleys, levers, catapults, etc., etc., expressive of enormous power put forth, and resistance overcome. Creeping along the sides of the walls, you perceived a staircase; and upon it, groping his way upwards, was Piranesi himself. Follow the stairs a little further, and you perceive it come to a sudden abrupt termination, without any balustrade, and allowing no step onwards to him who had reached the extremity, except into the depths below. Whatever is to become of poor Piranesi, you suppose, at least, that his labors must in some way terminate here. But raise your eyes, and behold a second flight of stairs still higher; on which again Piranesi is perceived, but this time standing on the very brink of the abyss. Again elevate your eye, and a still more aerial flight of stairs is beheld; and again is poor Piranesi busy on his aspiring labors; and so on, until the unfinished stairs and Piranesi both are lost in the upper gloom of the hall.³

At all events we are spared the tragic plunge, which would mar the tone of our present remarks. I might entitle this paper "The Comic Climax"—for that is the subject I have mainly tried to illustrate; or "The Comic Climax and Anticlimax"—since it is well-nigh impossible to collect instances of one and not of the other of these closely allied opposites. The title might also include the word *staircases*, for reasons already noted or yet to appear. Further, our topic is connected with that of rhetorical amplification and accumulation, and with the processes of magnifying and minifying in general. I have therefore wished to mingle some graver illustrations with the gay, and not to neglect the topic of proportion and disproportion. Accordingly, since the examples are gathered from varied sources, and since the climax is a rhetorical device of a general nature, not limited to comedy, the reader will please not challenge the title. Be it noted, however, that Comedy and Rhetoric in their history have been closely allied. And observe, after soaring aloft we are down again on solid, dry, prosaic ground. Let us start afresh, with a definition from the Oxford Dictionary:—

³ *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, ed. by Garnett, pp. 133-4.

Climax. Properly (in Rhetoric): A figure in which a number of propositions or ideas are set forth so as to form a series in which each rises above the preceding in force or effectiveness of expression; gradation.

The Greek word *climax*, which stands for the rhetorical figure, means "a ladder"; and we thereby indicate, not the topmost rung alone, but all the rungs, including the lowest. When the orator or poet reaches the top of his flight, he is said to "cap the climax". When we reverse the process, and run down the scale, the figure may be called a "declension". The last step up or down naturally is the most important, and is likely to be more elaborate than the others—as when Homer's Chryseis trips down the gang-plank:—

ἐκ δὲ Χρυσῆς νηὸς βῆ ποντοπόροιο.⁴

The last step is also the most perilous. Pride goeth before destruction, and the orator or poet when attempting a lofty ascent is always in danger of bombast or bathos. In fact, the chances are at least two to one that a climax will be comic, for the humor may be either intended or unintentional. If, in large measure, true art lies in the concealment of art, the serious poet must be sparing in the use of this figure, for in making a climax he cannot conceal what he is doing.

The Latin term for this figure is *gradatio*, "the making of a staircase". The literary process is associated with one that has been called "accumulation". Later I shall illustrate with the accumulation of woes that fell upon Job. At the moment, however, let us turn to the first and greatest extant treatise on Rhetoric, that of Aristotle. In connection with "accumulation" and "climax" he says that all men make use of the categories of "more" and "less". He means that we are constantly magnifying and minifying things. In a debate you try to make your own arguments look large, and those of your opponent small. In a tragedy the hero seeks to minimize the flaw in character, or the misstep in conduct, that will yet bring about his downfall, and to magnify the power of fate or circumstance as the cause of his misfortune. That is the way of men in everyday life. We

⁴*Iliad*, I. 439.

tend to magnify the relatively unimportant, and to minify the great. Comedy reverses the process, and helps us to see things in their true proportions. Now the reversal is more easily effected through a series of steps than all at once. I am, of course, not quoting Aristotle, but merely adapting his thought for those who do not read him.

He does discuss the figure called "climax"; and it probably is significant that he illustrates the figure from the dramas of Epicharmus, the greatest comic poet before Aristophanes. Indeed, there is a "climax" of Epicharmus that seems to have caught Aristotle's fancy. He cites it, or alludes to it, not only in the *Rhetoric*, but also in his treatise *On the Generation of Animals*, and twice in the *Metaphysics*.⁵

In Aristotle's view, the best climax, comic or otherwise, seems to be one in which the successive steps are related to one another in a sequence of cause and effect. The items are not merely arranged in an ascending (or descending) scale, but each term grows out of the preceding, so that the end has its origin in the beginning. Thus he says in the *Rhetoric*:—

Accumulation and climax—as used by Epicharmus—[serve to magnify a subject], since the accumulation of details makes any preëminence striking, and what you are magnifying appears to be the origin and cause of many things.

His point is readily seen in a few lines from Mother Goose:—

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost,
For want of the shoe, the horse was lost,
For want of the horse, the rider was lost,
For want of the rider, the battle was lost,
For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost,
And all from the want of a horseshoe nail!

In dealing with the generation of animals Aristotle says that "we speak of one thing coming from another in many senses"; so lastly, as in the climax of Epicharmus, "from slander comes

⁵ The passages are collected in my volume, *An Aristotelian Theory of Comedy*, pp. 153-4. On its scholarly side the present article may be regarded as supplementary to that volume, where I failed to adduce examples of the comic climax, not then realizing its wide distribution in literature.

railing, and from this, fighting." Here, and again in the *Metaphysics*, his words remind us of a fragment still surviving from Epicharmus, which (omitting the possible distribution of the speeches) we may thus translate:—

From sacrificing comes feasting, from feasting drinking,
 . . . from drinking mockery, from mockery riot, from
 riot indictment, from indictment a sentence, from a sen-
 tence fetters, the stocks, and a fine.

The fragment doubtless was part of a lively dialogue, for the comedies of Epicharmus were marked by swift interchange of dramatic utterance. The successive replies drawn by Socrates from a reluctant adversary, often ending in some one tremendous admission, show an influence on the Platonic Dialogues from the method of this elder comic poet. His device must have had a line of imitators in Greek comedy also, and hence must have been followed in Roman; but I wish to illustrate the point in Epicharmus and Aristotle rather from modern writers.

We may start with the last play of Molière. In *Le Malade Imaginaire*, the brother of the hypochondriac Argan has dismissed the attendant of Monsieur Purgon, who has Argan's case in hand. The enraged physician himself appears on the scene to avenge the insult. His threats, only in part intelligible to the terrified patient, may need some explanation for the reader: *bradypepsy* is a slow and imperfect digestion; *apepsy*, an absence of digestion; *lientery*, an incipient form of dysentery.

MONSIEUR PURGON. Since you are a declared rebel to the remedies I have prescribed for you, . . . let me inform you that I give you up to your evil constitution, to the inclemency of your bowels, the corruption of your blood, the acridity of your bile, and the feculence of your humors. . . . And I will that within four days your state shall be incurable.

ARGAN. Have pity!

M. P. That you fall into bradypepsy.

ARG. Monsieur Purgon!

M. P. From bradypepsy into dyspepsia.

ARG. Monsieur Purgon!

M. P. From dyspepsia into apepsy.

ARG. Monsieur Purgon!

M. P. From apepsy into lientery.

ARG. Monsieur Purgon!

M. P. From lientery into dysentery.

ARG. Monsieur Purgon!

M. P. From dysentery into dropsy.

ARG. Monsieur Purgon!

M. P. And from dropsy into deprivation of life, whither your folly will have led you.⁶

This sort of climax—or “declension”—is probably very old; the subject of medicine has always offered opportunities for comic effect. A good parallel before Molière is furnished by Shakespeare, whose Polonius discovered the origin and cause of Hamlet’s madness in a supposed rebuff by Ophelia:—

And he, repulsèd—a short tale to make—
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness; and by this declension
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we wail for.⁷

As for Molière, a student of the Spanish, Italian, and ancient drama, he used the device of accumulation and climax in one of his earliest plays, *La Jalousie de Barbouillé*. Here, again, much of the amusement is provided by a doctor, garrulous and bombastic, who runs up the ladder and down again as follows:—

DOCTOR [*tucking up his gown behind his buttocks*]. You take me, then, for a man that would do anything for money, for a man governed by pecuniary interest, a mercenary soul? Know, my friend, that if you were to give me a purse full of pistoles, if this purse were in a costly box, this box in a precious case, this case in a wondrous casket, this casket in a curious cabinet, this cabinet in a magnificent room, this room in an agreeable apartment, this apartment in a stately castle, this castle in a matchless citadel, this citadel in a famous town, this town in a fruitful island, this island in a wealthy province, this province in a flourishing kingdom, and this kingdom stretching throughout the world; and if you were to give me the world in which should be this flourishing kingdom, in which should be this wealthy province, in which should be this fruitful island, in which should be this famous town, in which should be this matchless citadel, in which should be this stately castle, in which should be this agreeable apartment, in which should be this curious cabinet, in which should be this wondrous casket, in which should be this precious case, in which should be this costly box, in which should be this purse full of pistoles; I should care as little about you and your money as about that.⁸

As a final instance from Molière we may cite the domestic brawl which opens *Le Médecin Malgré Lui*; it renders concrete

⁶ *Le Malade Imaginaire*, III. 6.

⁷ *Hamlet*, II. 2. 146-51.

⁸ *La Jalousie*, etc., scene 2.

the sequence Aristotle noted in Epicharmus: out of drinking comes railing, out of railing abuse, out of abuse fighting between man and wife, and out of wife-beating a penalty for Sganarelle which is the motive of the whole play. But let us take a few more illustrations from Shakespeare. Falstaff's account of the men who robbed him and his fellow-thieves grows in a numerical ascension:—

Two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. . . . Four rogues in buckram suits let drive at me— [PRINCE: "What, four? Thou saidst but two even now."] These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado, but took all their seven points in my target, thus.⁹

On the other hand, Touchstone, in his argument with Corin, caps a logical process:—

Why, if thou never wast at court, thou never sawest good manners; if thou never sawest good manners, then thy manners must be wicked; and wickedness is sin, and sin is damnation. Thou art in a parlous state, shepherd.¹⁰

His method is that of many popular jests. A bee-hive is a bad potato: for, a bee-hive is a bee-holder, a beholder is a spectator, and a specked 'tater is a bad potato. Touchstone likewise employs the numerical climax:—

TOUCHSTONE. . . . I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one. . . . We met, and found the quarrel was upon the seventh cause.

JAQUES. . . . How did you find the quarrel on the seventh cause?

TOUCH. Upon a lie seven times removed, . . . as thus, sir. I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard; he sent me word, if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was: this is called the "retort courteous". If I sent him word again, it was not well cut, he would send me word, he cut it to please himself: this is called the "quip modest". If again, it was not well cut, he disabled my judgment: this is called the "reply churlish". If again, it was not well cut, he would answer, I spake not true: this is called the "reproof valiant". If again, it was not well cut, he would say, I lie: this is called the "countercheck quarrelsome". And so to the "lie circumstantial", and the "lie direct".

JAQUES. And how oft did you say his beard was not well cut?

TOUCH. I durst go no further than the "lie circumstantial", nor he durst not give me the "lie direct"; and so we measured swords and parted.¹⁰

⁹*I Henry IV*, II. 4. 193-208.

¹⁰*As You Like It*, III. 2. 39-43.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, V. 4. 47-87.

As in comedy, the play of men, so in the play of children the climax is a resource against tedium. Is there one of my readers who never decorated his school-book thus?—

John Henry Smith
1 Main Street
Kalamazoo
Michigan
United States
Western Hemisphere
World
Universe

A boy will say to his friend: "See that hill over there?" Friend: "Yes; the highest one, in the middle." Boy: "The hill with three trees on it." Friend: "Yes; one tree is higher than the others." Boy: "It has a big branch at the top." Friend: "Yes; on the end of the branch there is a bird." Boy: "The bird with the long tail." Friend: "Yes; the middle feather is the longest." Boy: "You mean the feather with a bug on it." Friend: "Yes; the bug with the flea on his back." And so *ad infinitum*.

The preceding example no doubt will recall a song that was once a favorite with American students, about the tree and the branch and the nest and the bird and the flea, and the green grass growing all around. This latter is one of many; for college boys are charmed when verse and notes build up a climax or staircase. In their song-books we observe *Excelsior* and *Upidee*; "ten little, nine little, eight little Injuns"; the diminishing forty-nine bottles, and the dwindling jolly sixpence; cumulative jingles telling of Johnny Schmoker and the instruments he can play; and the animals marching by two's, by three's, and by four's into Noah's ark—and so on:—

They rammed, jammed in twenty by twenty (*bis*) . . .

And they all slammed, crammed into the ark for to get out of the rain.

That is the figure of accumulation.

Similarly in folk-tales, whether for children or for childlike primitive humanity, we have *The House that Jack Built*, *Jack and the Bean-stalk* (in which the ascent to fortune proceeds from a single bean), *Hans in Luck*, and Andersen's *What the Old Man Does is Always Right* (which in *The Ladies' Pageant*,

by E. V. Lucas, in entitled *The Wife Perfect*). With the line of cause and effect we saw arising from the want of a horseshoe nail may be compared the sequence in *The Old Woman and Her Pig*. "As soon as the cat had lapped up the milk,"—

The cat began to kill the rat;
 The rat began to gnaw the rope;
 The rope began to hang the butcher;
 The butcher began to kill the ox;
 The ox began to drink the water;
 The water began to quench the fire;
 The fire began to burn the stick;
 The stick began to beat the dog;
 The dog began to bite the pig;
 The little pig in a fright jumped over the stile;
 And so the old woman got home that night.

When an efficient cause begins to work, the whole sequence is put in motion. Note that the sequence interlocks verbally, too. The word-echo between the end of one statement or member and the beginning of the next is typical of the comic climax from Epicharmus down. *Ein Wort giebt das andere*.

A regular process, with a tendency to climactic order, belongs to the very essence of story-telling and literary composition. Tragedies naturally exhibit a climactic accumulation of woes, one following another in a sequence of cause and effect, or at all events in a probable order; each prepares us for the next, however swift and unexpected the *dénouement* may be. Even a chapter of accidents looks reasonable if the arrangement is climactic; witness the story of Job:—

And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house; and there came a messenger unto Job, and said: "The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them; and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away. Yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said: "The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said: "The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said: "Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's

house ; and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead ; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said : "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away : blessed be the name of the Lord."

But we are not here much concerned with real tragedy. The story of Job has been introduced in the main because it helps us on to other instances of accumulation and climax in which stories of ill luck are turned to comic effect. Many a climax ends in such fashion that we laugh with surprise at a disclosure ordinarily painful. The pain is eliminated by the steps through which the end is reached. So in the story noted by Professor Crane as a variant of a mediæval preacher's exemplum. It is called:—

BAD NEWS

MR. G. Ha, steward! How are you, my old boy? How do things go on at home?

STEWARD. Bad enough, your honor ; the magpie 's dead.

MR. G. Poor Mag! So he 's gone. How came he to die?

STEWARD. Over-ate himself, sir.

MR. G. Did he? Indeed! A greedy dog! Why, what did he get that he liked so well?

STEWARD. Horse-flesh, sir ; he died of eating horse-flesh.

MR. G. How came he to get so much horse-flesh?

STEWARD. All your father's horses, sir.

MR. G. What, are they dead, too?

STEWARD. Ay, sir ; they died of overwork.

MR. G. And why were they overworked, pray?

STEWARD. To carry water, sir.

MR. G. To carry water! And what were they carrying water for?

STEWARD. Sure, sir, to put out the fire.

MR. G. Fire! What fire?

STEWARD. Oh! sir, your father's house is burned down to the ground.

MR. G. My father's house burned down! And how came it on fire?

STEWARD. I think, sir, it must have been the torches.

MR. G. Torches! What torches?

STEWARD. At your mother's funeral.

MR. G. My mother dead!

STEWARD. Ah! poor lady, she never looked up after it.

MR. G. After what?

STEWARD. The loss of your father.

MR. G. My father gone, too?

STEWARD. Yes, poor gentleman, he took to his bed as soon as he heard of it.

MR. G. Heard of what?

STEWARD. The bad news, sir, an' please your honor.

MR. G. What! more miseries? More bad news?

STEWARD. Yes, sir. Your bank has failed, and your credit is lost; and you are not worth a shilling in the world. I made bold, sir, to come to wait on you about it, for I thought you would like to hear the news!"

This type of climax is related to one that advances with a see-saw motion, in which the mind of the reader is drawn up and down, and up again—or vice versa—somewhat as in De Quincey's account of Piranesi's staircase. There is a series of discoveries, each one of which, after conveying a bit of information, leaves us in a partial ignorance that delays the final revelation. But for fear of wearying the reader I must not myself put off the close and climax of this paper:—

A friend of mine was married to a scold;
To me he came, and all his grievance told.
Says he: "She's like a woman raving mad."
"Alas!" said I, "that 's very bad."
"No, not so bad," said he, "for with her, true,
I had both lands and houses—hard cash, too."
Said I: "My friend, then that was well for thee."
"T was not so well," said he;
"For I and her own brother
Agreed to go to law with one another.
We did so; I was cast; the suit was lost;
And every single penny went to pay the cost."
"That was bad," said I.
"Well, not so bad," said he;
"For we agreed that he the lands should keep,
And give to me four score of Yorkshire sheep;
Fair, fat, and fine they were to be."
"Well, surely that," said I, "was well for thee."
"T was not so well; for when the sheep I got,
They every single one died of the rot."
"That was bad," said I.
"Well, not so bad," said he;
"Into an oaken vat
I thought to scrape the fat,
And melt it for the winter store."

¹¹From *The Common School Speaker*, by Noble Butler, Louisville, Kentucky, 1856, p. 57, as quoted by T. F. Crane in *The Exempla of Jacques de Vitry*, pp. 217-8. Professor Crane refers to a story, *Ein Wort giebt das andere*, in Hebel's *Schatzästlein des Rheinischen Hausfreundes*, 1811 (Peter Hebel's *Werke*, ed. by Behagel, Berlin, 1883, 2. 137).

"Well, surely, that," said I, "was better than before."
 "T was not so well; for, having got a clumsy fellow
 To scrape the fat, and melt it into tallow,
 Into the seething mass the fire catches,
 And, like brimstone matches,
 Burns the place to ashes."
 "That was bad," said I.
 "Well, not so bad," said he;
 "For harkee what was best:
 My scolding wife was burnt among the rest."¹²

We must not end, however, with the note of comic cynicism. Rather, I shall finish off this accumulation with a sample from wholesome romantic comedy, capping the climax with a slight discovery touching Shakespeare. Will the reader kindly swing back to Polonius and Touchstone? That the dramatist was acquainted with rhetorical terms for the figure of *gradatio*—the staircase or figure of degrees, or, as his contemporary Puttenham names it, "the marching figure"—we learn not only from the "declension" noted by Polonius. Jaques specifically inquires of Touchstone: "Can you nominate in order now the degrees of the lie?" Touchstone replies: "I will name you the degrees," and repeats his climbing list of seven items.¹³ But the poet's diction is even more suggestive of technical knowledge in Rosalind's account of the love-making between Oliver and Aliena:—

There was never anything so sudden but the fight of two rams, and Cæsar's thrasonical brag of "I came, saw, and overcame": for your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy; and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage which they will climb incontinent.¹⁴

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¹² From *Notes and Queries*, 12 S., No. 1, p. 136.

¹³ *As You Like It*, V. 4. 88-97.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, V. 2. 30-8.

THE MAKING OF A LIBERAL

Two portraits of John Morley are before me. The first is dated 1881, the second, 1922. From each there looks a strong face, with high forehead, deep-set, searching eyes, aquiline nose, sensitive mouth, firm chin—the face of the thinker who can yet act—and feel. The young man looks out hopefully, challengingly. The old man's grave gaze is deepened by lines about the mouth, saddened by shadows under the eyes. He has known defeat, disillusion. But the light in his eyes is not quenched, and on the fine, worn face there rests tranquillity.

What was the faith of this man, whose long, arduous life of eighty-four years has lately ceased? He was not only statesman and man of letters—he was the epitome of an era. His death ended the great tradition of Mill and of Gladstone, the tradition of Victorian Liberalism. To-day the very word Liberalism has all but lost its meaning. The more reason, then, that we should linger for a little while over the creed of this “last survivor of the heroic age.” A glimpse of the various strands of which his Liberalism was woven may help us to understand it better; to find in it some values of which our age still stands in need.

What this Liberalism was, Morley himself has finely stated:—

Respect for the dignity and worth of the individual is its root. It stands for the pursuit of social good against class interest or dynastic interest. It stands for the subjection to human judgment of all claims of external authority.

Individual liberty for the fullest development, social justice versus privilege, reason versus force—such was the creed of Morley, not a slogan but a spirit. Its prophet in England was John Stuart Mill; its gospel was the essay *On Liberty*. Mill himself had already left behind, in his later work, the old *laissez-faire* Liberalism, the old pleasure-and-pain Utilitarianism. His successors were faced with the task of reshaping Liberalism to meet the grim realities of the Industrial Revolution: the tremendous problems of land, of labor, of education, of Irish Home Rule, of suffrage extension—in short, of what Carlyle called “the condition of England question.” The young Liberals did indeed

face these issues; they did not solve the greater question. It was not given to Morley to create a new Liberalism. His part was rather to express, in literature and in public life, those old Liberal ideals that we to-day seem almost to have lost: faith in the integrity of a man's mind, reasonableness that proves all things, tolerance that rests assured that truth is truth and shall prevail.

A search for the roots of John Morley's Liberalism would carry us back to that "Lancashire valley at the foot of the bleak, stern moorland ridge" where lies the town of Blackburn. There, on December 24, 1838, Morley was born, and there, as he afterwards wrote, "the punctual clang of the factory bell in dark early mornings . . . the iron regularity of days and hours" passed into the very texture of his mind. The rigorous discipline of his home life and the severe exactitude of his first schoolmaster must have helped to mould those habits of independence and veracity that were to earn for him the enviable name of "honest John Morley". There is a recognition of the formative power of these earliest influences in his remark that his Oxford tutor "made me Aristotelian and not Platonist, for apart from tutorial teaching that was, I think, the Lancastrian temperament."

Of his years at Oxford, 1856-9, Morley's *Recollections* gives but a slight account. Lincoln College, to which he had won a scholarship, had fallen into a state of "sad intellectual dilapidation," and the temporary withdrawal of Mark Pattison deprived Morley of what would have been a rare stimulus. He does indeed acknowledge the influence of the Senior Commoner, Cotter Morison, afterwards one of the most brilliant of the Positivist group, above that of any tutor or professor. It is true that every page he ever wrote bore the impress of his study of the ancient philosophers—"that grand old fortifying classical curriculum" that Frederic Harrison has called "the most fertile and bracing form of training then extant in England, if not in Europe." But to Morley, as to another of the great sons of Oxford, "the association of antique halls and grey time-worn towers went deeper than the schools." He also paid, in words that recall the more famous phrases of Arnold, his tribute to—

that University, from which so many noblest ideas have come, and are coming every day, in which every vision, though vain as the shadow of smoke, every aspiration after a nobler life, however little in accord with the outside world, finds a home and finds disciples.

But it was to his Oxford days that Morley himself traced the beginning of the great formative influence of his life, the influence of John Stuart Mill. For in those days, he afterward declared, "the star of Newman had set, and the sun of Mill had risen in its stead." And his statement in 1873 that "for twenty years, no one at all open to serious intellectual impressions has left Oxford without having undergone the influence of Mr. Mill's teaching" has been echoed by other Liberals like Frederic Harrison at Oxford, Leslie Stephen and Henry Sidgwick at Cambridge. In Morley's Oxford days, interest in Mill was raised to controversial pitch by Dean Mansel's Bampton lectures of 1856, the official reply of the Church to the radical philosophy.

The book through which Mill's ideas were permeating the universities was his famous *System of Logic* (1843). Few of us to-day have ever opened the book that was once, as Leslie Stephen said, a "kind of sacred book" to young Liberals of his and Morley's generation. What Morley owed to it his own testimony and his whole work make clear. Primarily it confirmed in him that "habit of seeking explanations of all phenomena in experience" which he called "the true positivism". Then, too, it set forth that idea of a definite, scientific law of society which became the basis of all Morley's biographic studies of men in relation to their times. And, finally, Morley inherited from his master that belief in progress through education which was not only the outcome of their premises, but the motive of all their endeavors. To Morley and his generation, Mill's *Logic* was "a step toward sounder thinking about society and institutions—a step, in other words, toward Liberalism." To them it stood for the dedication of thought to social action; on its principles they built their programmes.

It was in 1859, the year when Morley left Oxford, that Mill published the essay *On Liberty*. Of its influence Morley said: "I do not know whether then or at any other time so short a

book ever instantly produced so wide or so important an effect on contemporary thought." What the essay *On Liberty* meant to Morley may best be seen in his own essay, *On Compromise*. Its theme, the limits of compromise in thought, word and action, is primarily a continuation of Mill's high argument, and thus is bound up in the great English tradition of the apostles of liberty, from Milton to Mill. Morley's essay, like its great ancestors, was called forth by burning questions of the hour, questions of religious conformity and political cowardice. It was, in truth, as Mr. Asquith has said of it, "a ruthless unveiling of some characteristic Victorian insincerities," and belonged to "that catena of prophetic literature that included Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold." "The little book was probably needed," said its writer simply, "for it found much acceptance and made a long impression." The issues of the seventies are forgotten now, and the essay *On Compromise* is neglected. Yet no age ever stood in greater need of its prophetic warning: "The law of things is that they who tamper with veracity from whatever motive are tampering with the vital force of human progress."

The essay *On Compromise* has been finely called the moral portrait of its author. It also portrays the moral likeness of Mill, who was to Morley always the exemplar of wise compromise. For by 1874 the "Master" had become the friend. The beginning of the friendship, as Morley tells it in his *Recollections*, is so characteristic as to be worth repeating. Coming to London after leaving Oxford, without connections or prospects, he read for the bar for a time, and entered the lists of journalism. He soon made a place for himself as a writer for the good old Tory *Saturday Review* and it was there, oddly enough, that an article called *New Ideas* appeared in 1865, which caught the eye of Mill. He at once sought out the writer of the article—which was, added its author, "pure milk of the Millite word"—and the friendship thus begun ended only with the death of Mill. The rare quality of that friendship was attested by every word of Morley's, as, for instance:—

A young disciple's reverence, gratitude, and admiration was pretty sure to grow stronger as the days went by, though even young disciples do not always lose the

rudiments of a mind of their own, and nobody would have been more displeased than Mill himself had it been otherwise.

We, too, must feel the spell of that clear personality, so simple, candid, magnanimous, "the saint of rationalism", as Gladstone called him, when we read the pages dedicated to him in Morley's essays and *Recollections*, the passages that vibrate with grief for "the dead master".

With Mill's encouragement the young journalist undertook, in 1867, a task that proved to be his opportunity. Two years earlier, a group including Walter Bagehot, Anthony Trollope and T. Cotter Morison had founded the *Fortnightly Review*, with George Henry Lewes as editor. This venture was then, as Morley said in his *Valedictory*, "the only attempt to conduct a periodical on the principles of free discussion and personal responsibility," and the first to introduce the signatures of contributors. At first the experiment failed financially, but during the fifteen years of Morley's editorship, the *Fortnightly* succeeded so well that it became the leading organ of Liberalism in politics, religion, science, and literature. Naturally, in these years of warfare against old creeds, ideas, and institutions, the pages of the *Fortnightly* rang with battle. Huxley's famous essay *On the Physical Basis of Life* excited an immense sensation; Leslie Stephen's *An Agnostic's Apology* flung down the gauntlet to orthodoxy; and Frederic Harrison's spirited defence of labor unions "caused the *Review* to be regarded as an incendiary publication." But a periodical that could boast such shining names as Arnold, Meredith, Pater, Rossetti, Swinburne, was no mere barren battle-ground. In his fifteen years of editorship, as in his long service as literary adviser of Macmillan's and editor of their English Men of Letters Series, Morley was serving the cause of literature as well as of Liberalism. And it was during these years that he produced his own first and finest contributions to literature—the *Critical Miscellanies* and the *French Studies*.

Since it is with the *French Studies* that Morley's name in literature may stand or fall, it is worth while to note their place and purpose in their own day. It was the Romantic movement, and above all, "the stony antipathies of Thomas Carlyle," as Frederic

Harrison once put it, that taught the nineteenth century to despise the eighteenth as an age of mere scepticism and unbelief. The years following the accession of Victoria marked, says Edmund Gosse, the lowest ebb of French influence on English thought, when "French Philosophism" seemed indeed, as Carlyle predicted, to have vanished into nonentity. But with the rise of the rationalist movement in literature, the tide turned. The historical estimates in Comte's *Positive Philosophy* and the influence of Mill opened the minds of the young Liberals to a very different judgment. And two of them, Leslie Stephen in his monumental work on English thought and literature, and John Morley in his studies, *Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Turgot, Condorcet*, did actually achieve the restoration to its true place of that age of reason and of humanism.

Morley's championship of the French *philosophes* was partly purposeful and partly temperamental. What his purpose was, he has told us in his *Recollections* and in that retort to his political foes called *A Few Words on French Models*. It was to introduce to English readers "that era of intellectual emancipation not wholly distant from that which was fast ripening at home"—to portray those French thinkers as the forerunners of Liberalism. In truth, they were the spiritual ancestors of Morley's own Liberal creed: his threefold faith in reason, in progress, in humanity, was essentially their faith. With some of these men Morley had lived in veritable comradeship of the spirit: Turgot and Condorcet he ranked with Mill among those high figures who first placed chart and compass in his hands.

Naturally, Morley's biographical and critical studies have not the objectivity of the strictly scientific school. Yet the studies of Voltaire, Rousseau, Burke, Cromwell, the essays on Byron, Carlyle, Macaulay, Emerson have not vanished with the controversies of yesterday. They hold their place in literature by reason of their penetrating vision of character and of social movements, and of the fine clarity of style that now and then surges into the long cadence of a deep emotion.

There was no abandonment of his work as thinker and writer when, in 1883, Morley entered Parliament and took up the battle for political Liberalism. He had always rated the active higher

than the contemplative life; but he carried into politics his lifelong passion for things of the spirit. His name stands as a symbol of veracity and integrity in public life. Opponents accused him of inconsistency, but his record reads clear. Parted by the Irish issue from his first ally, Joseph Chamberlain, he became the trusted friend and counsellor of Gladstone, championing the cause of Irish Home Rule, and sharing its defeats in 1886 and 1895. As Secretary for Ireland he worked tirelessly for conciliation rather than coercion; as Secretary for India, he admitted native members to the Councils, and laid the foundations for far-reaching reforms whose end is not yet. A faithful servant of the Empire, he yet steadfastly opposed the Imperialism of the Boer War and the "white man's burden". Created Viscount Morley in 1908, he led in the House of Lords the historic fight for the bill that limited the veto power of that body. His resignation from the Cabinet at the outbreak of the Great War marked the end of his public life and of his epoch. But his return to the House of Lords in 1921 to move the adoption of the Irish treaty fittingly signalized the triumph of one of the great Liberal causes for which he had fought.

One striking trait that marked alike the writings and the public life of Morley was his sympathy with diversities of men and of opinions. This "resolute equity and diligent breadth of outlook" was one of the lessons that he ascribed to the Positivist school. His characteristic union of independence with receptivity was nowhere better shown than in his relations with that notable group of the followers of Comte that included Congreve, Frederic Harrison, George Henry Lewes, and George Eliot. Although Comte's system of thought laid strong hold on him, he was held back from formal union with the Positivists by his own anti-sectarian instinct, confirmed by the influence of Mill and of his scientist friends, Huxley, Spencer, and Tyndall,—for science was another strand in the complex fabric of his mind. Thus, though never a Positivist with a capital P, Morley drew from Positivism both ideas and ideals: ideas of historic sequence and social laws, ideals of devotion to "the long brotherhood of humanity" that made the religion of George Eliot and of some of the noblest spirits in the days of denials.

The man who could write justly of such opposites as Burke and Rousseau, de Maistre and Voltaire, had indeed learned the priceless lesson of toleration. Morley was one of those larger Liberals who acknowledged the influence of the great Conservatives,—Burke and Coleridge. The one exception to this tolerance of understanding was the treatment of the Church and the theologians in his early writings. But it is significant that many of these “needlessly aggressive” passages, as he himself called them, have been changed or omitted in the latest edition of his works. And against them we must set those fine passages that reveal his sympathy with the beauty of holiness and of true religion. On that high theme we may well take as his last word his fine answer to his constituents :—

Religion has many dialects, but it has one true voice, the voice of human pity, of mercy, of patient justice, and to that voice your candidate, to the best of his knowledge and belief, has always done all he could to listen.

It is breadth of sympathy, together with a gift for discipleship, that makes of Morley's reticent *Recollections* a roll-call of illustrious Victorians. He must have been a rare friend who kept Chamberlain's confidence after politics had sundered their paths; to whom Leslie Stephen came in his hour of bereavement; over the ashes of whom Spencer chose to say the last words; whom Meredith named as his literary executor; of whom Gladstone wrote : “John Morley is on the whole about the best stay I have.” The great biography of Gladstone is in itself the best expression of an understanding that could surmount the deepest of differences. It was a man worthy of such friendships who could say of them : “Burdens fell clean off, as one thought of these clear spirits, our teachers, friends, and leaders.”

Among these “clear spirits”, the guides of Morley's mind, the poets had their place. It is true that his own power was critical rather than creative, that he lacked the imaginative vision that belongs to the poets, “the makers”. Yet by some among them his spirit was deeply moved. The poems of his contemporary, Matthew Arnold, were, Morley wrote, “a cherished companion of mine on many a journey,” read “with much fortifying

quietude of mind." Indeed, Morley was closely akin to Arnold in feeling as well as in mind, and it is no accident that both men found inspiration in two great poets—Goethe and Wordsworth. To Morley Goethe was primarily a moral force, the sage in whom "most men and women of a certain cultivation outside the churches to-day find their moral stay." For him the wisdom of Goethe was summed up in his "ever noble psalm of life," *Das Göttliche*,—

Edel sei der Mensch
Gut und hilfreich—

a fit creed for a freethinker.

It was to Wordsworth that Morley went, as Mill, Arnold, and so many of his other Liberal brothers had gone, for that healing power of poetry upon the spirit of man. His journals quoted in his *Recollections* tell us how often, in his arduous days, he banished politics and took refuge in Wordsworth. And it was out of his own experience that he once described the secret of this poet: "To lead us . . . into inner moods of settled peace, . . . to give us quietness, strength, steadfastness and purpose, whether to do or to endure."

There are passages in Morley's writings that show how he, too, like Arnold and like Wordsworth, sought in nature his refreshment. Through his journals are scattered glimpses of the scenes he loved; of the Lake country—"that delicious scenery which had for years been my earthly paradise"—of the Scottish highlands, Irish glens, and Surrey uplands. Here is one striking picture:—

We had nine or ten hours steaming from Isle Ornsay to Oban. . . . More glorious scenery I have never beheld . . . The weather perfect, lovely films of vapours, gleaming slopes of verdure, glistening crags, strange evanescent veils of cloud. . . . This is the nature from which we came, to which we return. . . . We are one with this—atoms in the wild whirl. . . . The vision purges us of self.

That last note—"atoms in the wild whirl"—is as far from Wordsworth as it is characteristic of Morley. It takes us back to Lucretius, to whom Morley dedicated a chapter of sombre musings on man's mortality. It was not strange that this staunch

agnostic, who had put aside the old creeds and hopes, should find sustenance in the Roman poet who transformed denial into courage, or in the Stoic philosophy of that "saint of agnosticism", Marcus Aurelius. In truth, it is through Morley's kinship with these grave thinkers that we come nearest to his own spirit. "The fortitude of a resolute, open-hearted stoicism," he once wrote, "is no bankrupt or useless thing," and the words might stand as his own apologia.

Yet it was not a "sunless creed" which inspired that generation of Victorian Liberals: "an animated, hopeful, interesting, and on the whole, either by reason of, or in spite of, its perpetual polemics, a happy generation . . . a generation of intrepid effort forward." Rather the twilight tone of the last chapters of the *Recollections* reveals the sorrow of a worn old man looking out from his study upon a world in which Liberalism has been swallowed up in war, and reason and tolerance and understanding seem lost in a welter of passion and fear and hate.

But it is not on a note of lament that a study of John Morley should end. His name brings to me always some words that he wrote long ago to describe the springs of that great liberating movement of which his own work was a part. And I believe that men cannot wholly forget the faith of this truth-seeker:—

Undivided love of our fellows, steadfast faith in human nature, steadfast search after justice, firm aspiration towards improvement, and generous contentment in the hope that others may reap whatever reward may be.

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FRÉDÉRIC MISTRAL: POET OF THE SOIL

Frédéric Mistral died in 1914, just four months before the beginning of the World War. He had lived for nearly eighty-four years, and had seen his life-work the success which the most extravagant dreams of his youth could hardly have pictured. He had been famous since the age of twenty-nine, and had received such honors as few men of letters know in their lifetime. Again and again he had been offered a seat in the French Academy. He had been awarded the Nobel Prize in literature. Poetry-lovers and philologists from all parts of the world had sought him out in his simple home in the remote village of Maillane. But what pleased him most was the love accorded him by his own people of Provence. I once heard a fervent Provençal say: "Ah, 1914—that was a dark year! Our Master Mistral died and the horrible war began." No disaster, however great, could overshadow in the eyes of true sons of Provence the catastrophe which the death of Mistral meant to their *pays*.

In the year 1900 there was published at Marseilles a *Mistraliana* bibliography, containing hundreds of titles. Little just criticism is found in any article named in this bibliography. The *Félibres*, as the members of the society for the advancement of letters in the original languages of the Midi call themselves, were wonderful propagandists, and most of the talk about their chief poet had been only publicity for which they themselves were mostly responsible. But French thought has gone through an exacting test during the past nine years, and a crystallization of ideas has resulted. Critics are now giving real reasons for the greatness of Frédéric Mistral. They are pointing out that in any one of four ways he might be studied as a significant figure of the nineteenth century.

First, he might be considered as a patriot. His love for the land was something mystic, something not to be explained. It was not a love for Provence alone. Mistral was first of all a Provençal, but he never forgot that as such he was also a Frenchman. He never lost an opportunity to resent the charge often brought against the *Félibres* that they sought to bring about

the secession of the Midi from the rest of France. Second, he may be looked upon as a defender of the classic tradition. Homer and Vergil, not the Troubadours nor Petrarch nor Dante, were Mistral's great gods. His view of life was the healthful, rounded view of the firm classicist. His technique was Vergilian. M. Jean Carrère, in his provocative book translated into English under the title of *Degeneration in the Great French Masters*, hurls diatribes at all the romanticists from Rousseau to Paul Verlaine, and then ends his book with a chapter glorifying Frédéric Mistral, hailing him as the greatest hope for the revival of real strength in French literature. Third, he is important as a philologist. *Le Trésor du Félibrige*, his stupendous dictionary of the languages of the Midi, is arousing more and more attention from those interested in Romance philology. This work cost Mistral ten years of his time and much of his poetic inventiveness, but there are many who consider it his strongest contribution towards the advancement of the cause to which he devoted his life. Fourth, he is being classed with the foremost poets of the soil, such as Robert Burns and John Synge. Some have ranked him with the Vergil of the *Georgics*, with Theocritus, and with the Goethe of *Hermann und Dorothea*.

It is certain that whatever broad appeal Mistral may make must be as patriot and poet of the soil. The two are in reality one. Nothing but a man's great love for his land and people can urge him to write about them with the rhapsodic enthusiasm which we find in the poems of Mistral. True, his enthusiasm often led him into exaggeration and extravagance; but, as Alphonse Daudet has so charmingly shown us, exaggeration and extravagance are natural traits of the Provençal. It would be hard to find a Provençal trait of character not brought out somewhere in the works of Mistral. In fact, it is such completeness that gives him his distinction. John Synge's sojourns in the Arran Islands and elsewhere among the Irish peasantry were adventures. They resulted in some of the most outstanding plays of modern times, but no one would proclaim these plays as a comprehensive depiction of present-day Celtic life. Synge was struck by the picturesque only; Mistral saw all Provence as picturesque, and tried to convince us that it really exists as he

saw it. Robert Burns was a part of the world he wrote about, but take away the language he used and there remains little of actual eighteenth-century Scotland in his poetry. The aims of Vergil in the *Georgics*, and of Theocritus in the *Idylls* were the same: they produced conventional pastorals. As for *Hermann und Dorothea*, it is the work of a student of character rather than of an enthusiastic folk-poet. Mistral may have lacked the divine genius for song found in some of these masters, but none of them had his intensity,—an intensity growing out of a nobly sincere patriotism.

One must know something of the geography of the *pays* of Mistral if the work of the poet is to be understood. The Provence which he loved and sang about is not the broad south-eastern corner of France commonly known as Provence. The stretch of country embracing Avignon on the north and extending to the sea, with Nîmes included on the west and the Alpilles on the east, is the Provence of Mistral. Although the section is small, it has a varied topography and an enchanting history. There are two large rivers, the Durance and the Rhône; there is a rocky, desert-like plain around Les Baux, called the Crau; there are hills and mountains; there are the salty marshes at the mouth of the Rhône, known as the Camargue. Besides Avignon and Nîmes and Les Baux, there are the towns of Arles, Beaucaire, Tarascon, Saint-Remy, Maillane, Font Vielle, and Les Saintes Maries,—all important in legend and history.

In his three epics, Mistral aimed to give a full impression of this much-varied section as it existed in the middle of the nineteenth century. *Mirèio* (1859) is devoted mainly to the plains and the marshes; in *Calendau* (1867) we have the mountains and the sea; and *Lou Pouèmo dou Rose* (1897) is a glorification of the great river of Provence. In *Nerto* (1884), a romantic narrative, and in *La Rèino Jano* (1890), a tragedy, the poet turned back to the flamboyant past of Provence, the period of the Troubadors and of the Avignon popes. *Lis Isclo d'Or* (1875) and *Lis Oulivado* (1912) are made up of miscellaneous lyrics, most of which are passionate outbursts of patriotism.

It is *Mirèio*, Mistral's first work and his masterpiece, that shows best his strength as poet of the soil. Throughout the

poem there is a youthful enthusiasm which approaches ecstasy. There is a spontaneity that causes the reader to forget the epic machinery. The beginning of the invocation sets a mood which is always maintained, a mood of simplicity and *naïveté*, pronounced characteristics of the Provençal. The following translation may give some idea of the beautiful effect of artlessness found in the original and in Mistral's own French translation:—

With Homer as my guide I sing!
 I sing a maid of my Provence.
 In all her virgin loves,
 Across the Crau, among the wheat,
 Down to the margin of the sea,
 I follow her.
 She is a soul of the soil,
 The very Crau itself is in her blood;
 And who would sing the maid must also sing the Crau.
 Well that she is resplendent only with the glow of youth!
 Well that she wears no golden diadem, nor royal cloak!
 My song shall raise her to the glory of a queen.
 I will praise her in our homely tongue;
 For, first of all, it is to you I sing,
 O workers in the fields and shepherds of Provence!

Then follows a prayer to the Saviour, "who was born among shepherds," to the Saviour of the *patrie*. The invocation ends with a folk-symbol: the aim to which the poet aspires is likened to a tender branch high on a fig-tree.

The simple plot unfolds slowly, a plot too well known through Gounod's opera *Mireille* to be retold here. That which fascinates is not the story: it is the mass of digressions which make up the picture of Provence.

The most striking characteristic of the nature of Provence is the sun. The Provençal believes that it is his sunshine which has given him his peculiar temperament, and it is very likely that he is right. At any rate, *Mirèio* shows a full recognition of the poetical possibilities of this theory. The story opens with a description of a sunset. From this point on the idea of the sun becomes a leading *motif*. The eighth canto, which relates the flight of the heroine across the Crau to the shrine of the holy Maries, is a grand fugue treatment of the splendor of the Provençal sunshine on a summer day. In the tenth canto, the sun

actually becomes a protagonist in the plot. *Mirèio* is struck by the piercing rays, and as a result of the stroke the holy Maries can appear to her in person, and in the end she can die and realize the true love which she is seeking.

The Provençaux prefer to think of *Mirèio* as allegorical. They like to fancy *Mirèio* herself as representing Provence. The sun stands for the all-consuming beauty towards which Provence dares to aspire. That she dares means that she falls. Thus, any decadence which might be ascribed to Provence in that she is not an independent nation can be prettily explained away.

Another indication of the mystic way in which the Provençaux regard their sunshine is seen in the fact that the chief emblem of the *Félibres* is the *cigale*. It is an insect, much like our cicada, which sings only when the sun is shining. Since it is the sunshine of Provence which makes her poets sing, naturally the *cigale* is looked upon as a fitting emblem for the society organized to encourage literary production.

Although in *Mirèio* Mistral emphasizes the sun in portraying the nature of Provence, he does not overlook other aspects. The Rhône becomes a character in the action when Ourrias, the one villain in the story, is tricked to his death by the phantom boatmen of the mighty river. One of the most lyrical passages in the entire epic is the description of the waters of the Rhône at dawn, which appears at the beginning of the tenth canto. The Alpilles and the overlooking heights of the Ventour are mentioned again and again as watchmen over Provence. The hills of Les Baux and the mysterious Cave of the Fairies form the setting of the fascinating sixth canto, in which much of the profane folklore of Provence is related. It was a favorite theory of Mistral that Dante got his idea for his pictures of hell from a visit to the hills of Les Baux. Trees and flowers peculiar to Provence, such as the dwarf-oak, the olive, the fig, the mulberry, the salicorne and the tamarisk, are used in preference to plants found there but also found in other regions of France. The same may be said of the birds and animals made prominent in the poem.

Mistral always succeeded in making his nature-descriptions alive. This is partly due to the mood in which his poetry is written, the mood of simplicity and *naïveté* which I have spoken

of as sounded in the very opening lines of *Mirèio*. Nothing but a childish fancy can personify the sun and mountains and rivers and trees and rocks and insects and spray from the sea, and at the same time make such personification convincing. An imaginative folk will do this sincerely and with effect. Mistral, as a true folk-poet, did it with great naturalness. A second reason for his effectiveness in the treatment of nature was his great sensitiveness to objects. He loved his Provence; therefore, he learned it. He knew it thoroughly, and everything of it and concerning it thrilled him. I recall a walk I had with an old inn-keeper at Les Baux. He was greatly interested in the *flora* of Provence, and took much delight in pointing out to me plant after plant, of which he would proudly pronounce the scientific name, the French name, and the Provençal name. I marvelled at his familiarity with such an enormous number of plants. "Ah," he said, "I know plants only. Our Master Mistral knew everything else in Provence just as well,—rocks, birds, beasts, fishes, rivers, hills, the sea!" A reading of *Mirèio* makes one confident that the inn-keeper was right. Mistral knew the nature of his Provence, he found it beautiful and rejoiced in it, and it was easily made alive in his poetry.

The characters in *Mirèio* represent as many Provençal types as the poet could well bring into the plot. In later poems the number is extended until his gallery of portraits becomes immense. It was Mistral's aim that no type found in his beloved Provence should be slighted. The leading characters are so idealized that they lose all illusion of reality. There are many young women in Provence to-day who imagine themselves *Mirèios*, but they could not exist as such and still be human and natural. In the minor characters, however, Mistral showed himself a master of portraiture. For instance, *Mèste Ramoun*, the wealthy *mas*-dweller (*mas* is the Provençal name for a farm-house) in *Mirèio* is drawn with such a faithful sense of realism that one who knows Provence immediately recognizes the character as taken from life. As a matter of fact, in *Mèste Ramoun* Mistral was painting his own father. The three suitors of *Mirèio*,—the young dreamer-shepherd, the gallant horseman of Camargue, and the brutal cattle-tender, are again types which are true

to Provence. Mistral was weak in elaborating character, but where he had to give only a few strokes his pictures are sure and effective.

It is perhaps in the description of the folk customs that Mistral brings the true Provence closest to his readers. The picture of the evening meal before the *mas* of Mèste Ramoun in the first canto of *Mirèio* is unforgettable. We see the stone-hewn table, we see the master and his workmen and his vagabond guests gathered about it in the democratic fashion of Provence. *Mirèio* herself serves the food, "a salad made of greens of every sort and a large platter filled with beans." Those acquainted with the ways of Provence know that there must be singing before the meal is ended. And, surely enough, the venerable vagabond basket-maker sings in a most stirring manner a ballad of the Admiral Suffren, a popular Provençal hero. *Mirèio* abounds in such pictures. The picking of mulberry leaves for the silkworms, gossiping women assembled to "strip cocoons", shepherds in early spring driving their flocks to the mountains, the burning of the fires of Saint John and the dancing of the farandole on the eve of the harvesting season, gathering snails, threshing wheat on treading-floors,—all such customs are of the very soul of romantic and picturesque Provence.

The folk-poet must show how his people garb themselves. Mistral was much preoccupied with the idea of costume. It was one of his dreams that the traditional costume *du pays* should be made the standard of dress in Provence, especially among the women. On more than one occasion he urged the beauty and artistic grace of the Provençal coiffe and fichu and flowing skirt, and exhorted the women of Provence to cease trying to follow the fashions of Paris. The characters in his poems are usually described as wearing the costume *du pays*, and at times the costume is minutely depicted. When *Mirèio* gets herself ready for the flight to the shrine of the holy Maries, every detail of the dress (the traditional dress of the region around Saint Remy) which she adopts is set forth. The visitor to Provence to-day is usually impressed by the large number of natives who wear the coiffe and fichu; and, if he is fortunate enough to be present at a *fête* of the *Félibres*, he sees such a

glory of costume that he feels Mistral's contentions fully justified. A few days ago I received a programme for what is characterized as the "Grand Fêtes of the City of Arles—for the year 1923—under the Patronage of Honor of Madam Marie Frédéric Mistral." Parades and processions, bull-fights and balls, even a performance of *Samson et Dalila*, are listed. But such a series of celebrations in Provence, and under the patronage of the widow of Mistral, could not be complete without a *fête du costume*. And indeed the programme promises such a *fête*, with a "Court of Love" and the "Floral Games", when there will be "songs, poems, tambourines, and farandoles." Provence has not forgotten Mistral's plea.

It has been said that only in Provence could a Mistral have been possible. This statement has been made because of the appeal of Provence to the temperament of a poet,—an appeal growing out of the natural beauty of the land, out of the quaint customs of the folk, and, probably most of all, out of the richness of the legends. The great imagination of the Provençal has been recognized since the times of the Troubadours. Out of such imagination came the stories which make so entrancing the poems of Mistral. Some have considered these stories as invented by the poet himself, but to look at them in this light would be a gross injustice to the faithful recorder of the life of his people which Mistral undoubtedly was.

There are so many legends in *Mirèio* alone that one wonders how more were found for the other poems. Yet, Mistral by no means exhausted his supply. Legends seem to grow up and flower in Provence overnight; and, although their development is quick, they are never forgotten. I happened to be in Arles once when there was being held a 'congress' of stenographers from the south-eastern section of France. One evening of the meeting was devoted to the unveiling of a tablet at the supposed birth-place in Trinquaille, a suburb just across the Rhône from Arles, of Saint Gènet, a monkish scribe of the early Middle Ages and patron saint of stenographers. What the real story of Saint Gènet is I do not know, but I shall not forget the one which was invented for him on this occasion. It was said that he was very severe to his pupils, so severe that they grew to hate him.

Finally, they were unable to endure his remonstrances any longer. They banded themselves together, secured swords, rushed upon their master while he was copying a manuscript, and decapitated him. Headless though the good Saint G  net was, his skilled hands kept on writing! Many a story regarding Mistral himself has sprung up just as quickly and fixed itself in the minds of the Provenaux, ready to be handed down from generation to generation.

Since *Mir  io* was the first work of Mistral, he was free to bring into it the best legends which imaginative Provence had to offer. Some he told at length; others he summed up in a sentence or two. To one, the story of the holy Maries, one of the most precious of all Christian legends, he devoted two entire cantos. Moreover, he made it essential to the plot of the poem. According to the legend, certain disciples of Jesus, after the crucifixion of their Master, were driven from Palestine by their Jewish persecutors and set afloat on the sea in a worn barque, with neither sail nor oar. Driven by storms and threatened with destruction time after time, they were finally washed ashore on the coast of Provence, where stands to-day the sacred village of Les Saintes Maries. Among this company of disciples were Lazarus; his sisters, Mary and Martha, the latter of whom tamed the celebrated dragon of Tarascon; their servant, Sarah, patron saint of gipsies; Mary Magdalene; Trophime, who converted Arles; and Joseph of Arimethea, who went into England, but not, it is interesting to add, with the Holy Grail. The legend of these saints comes out of the very heart of mystic Provence. In *Mir  io* it becomes what it really is to the Provenaux, —a revelation and not a legend. It is told with an exaltation that carries us back to the religious fervor of the Middle Ages.

All the sacred legends as related by Mistral show this spirit of exaltation, but at the same time they lose none of the simplicity and charm of lifelikeness which make them truly Provenal. Remarkable for its *na  vet  * is the story of Saint Trophime. He is represented as the oldest and wisest of the disciples who are stranded on the coast of Provence. In utter ignorance of their whereabouts, the wanderers, with Trophime as their leader, follow a roadway and finally arrive at the walls of Arles. They

enter the gates and come upon the theatre, where a pagan festival is being celebrated. Trophime is filled with indignation when he sees a host of young girls, almost nude, dancing around an idol, a statue of Venus. In a loud voice he pronounces the name of Christ. The dancers immediately become still and hang their heads in shame; the statue topples from its pedestal and falls to the ground. Then Trophime tells the story of the suffering of Jesus, and all the Arlesians repent, believe and are baptized. But the Provençal does not stop the legend at this point. He adds comment on the fallen statue. In spite of the fact that it is anti-Christian and a thing of abomination, Trophime and his fellow saints see that it is beautiful. It is, in fact, the famous Venus of Arles, accepted symbol of the splendor of ancient Provence, and in the eyes of every devoted Provençal a far better work of art than the Venus of Milo!

Some critics have pointed to the sixth canto of *Mirèio* as the most inspired piece of writing which Mistral ever accomplished. He approaches it hesitatingly; he even stops to invoke the aid of his fellow *Felibre* poets. But at length he takes his hero and heroine down into the Cave of the Fairies, and the fairy-lore of Provence is unfolded before them through the powers of the keeper of the Cave, Taven the sorceress. The many legends here introduced are briefly told, but they are probably as complete as they exist in the minds of the folk. Among the great number of goblins and elves which are made to appear, one naturally meets universal types. There is a Robin Goodfellow, whose pranks are described as follows:—

In his cheerful moods he will sweep your kitchen, triple the eggs of your hens, add sticks to your fire, and turn your roast. But let caprice possess him, and alas for you! He is a mischief-maker then. Into your porridge he will pour a peck of salt. . . . If you are going to bed, he will put out your light. If you are going to vespers at Saint Trophime, he will spoil your Sunday dress.

There are Scaramouche and the Black Lamb and the Golden Goat. The two latter, however, are so localized that they seem to belong only to the fairy-lore of Provence. There are other types which are undoubtedly of pure Provençal origin. For

instance, Taven points out an "ungainly creature" who is "tossing her head as though she were a poplar." The witch addresses her:—

"Then, you are the Laundress! When you stand on Mount Ventour, you are taken for a cloud. But shepherds know, and quick, quick, they lead their sheep to the fold. You amass the erring clouds around you, and when there are enough for the wash you raise your arms and you beat and beat. When you wring your clothes, water flows by the bucketful. The sea rises and roars, and pale sailors commend their ships to Notre Dame."

The canto ends with a riotous description of the Provençal Witches' Sabbath.

The legends of Provence which deal with the monuments form a class in themselves. There is every reason why the Provençal should be proud of his monuments; they are indeed magnificent. The Pont du Gard, the Maison Carrée and the Baths at Nîmes, the arenas at Nîmes and Arles, the Alyscamps and the Théâtre Antique at Arles, the Palace of the Popes and the supposed chapel of Petrarch's Laura at Avignon, the Mausoleum and Arch at Saint Remy, the church at Saint Gilles, the ramparts at Les Baux,—the mention of the names of these monuments augurs romance. And to the Provençal they are romantic as his land itself is romantic. They are a part of it just as the hills and the plains and the rivers are a part of it. They have impressed him for centuries, and naturally legends and proverbs have grown up around them. I have already pointed out how the Théâtre Antique at Arles is made prominent in the legend of Saint Trophime. Much of *Nerto* is made up of stories concerning the Palace of the Popes. When a Provençal wants to show that something has great strength, he compares it with the pillars which support the Pont du Gard, to him giants always locked in a wrestle. Mistral made the most of this peculiar conception of monuments. As he tried to bring into his poems all types of persons found in Provence, in like manner his aim was to omit no monument. He presents each one to us with its age and its mystery and its legends, just as it appears to the Provençal who has always dwelt in its shadow.

Mistral called the Provençal Museum at Arles, known as the Museon Arleten, his last poem. It was inaugurated in 1899, mainly through the efforts of Mistral himself. Largely with the money received with the Nobel Prize in Literature, awarded to him in 1906, the poet secured for the museum the splendid seventeenth-century hôtel in which it is now housed. The collection is likely to strike the visitor as bizarre, but after it is studied it is recognized as perfectly characteristic of Provence and of Mistral himself. It is only another evidence of his determination to glorify his *patrie*. It is Provençal and at the same time it is French. And above all, it possesses that simple naturalness and charm so pronounced in the life of Provence and in the poems of Mistral. One finds as complete a representation of the nature of Provence as a museum could show. There are geological and botanical specimens. There are stuffed animals and birds and fishes. Some of the lifeless horses, fully caparisoned, do not exemplify the art of the taxidermist at its highest, but we smile at them as we do at the imperfections in Mistral's poems. One finds depicted the customs of the folk. There is a model of a typical *mas*, almost of natural size. There are implements used on the farms, vehicles of all sorts, and furniture. Costumes of different periods and of different sections of Provence are displayed. One of the traditional customs dearest to the heart of the Provençal, the feast of Noël, is shown in wax figures. Legends are told in paintings and by statues. One wax group shows the old Arlesian custom of the visit of the three women to the new mother and her first-born. The three are attired in the rich holiday costume of Arles, remarkable for the coiffe, the fichu, and the flowing skirt. One brings a match, symbolizing the desire that the child's body may be straight; another an egg, symbolical of fullness; and the third a lump of salt, symbolical of wisdom. The museum as a whole expresses in objects what the poems of Mistral express in verse. It is a summary of his life-work. As a museum it is unique, just as *Mirèio* as a poem is unique. But after all it is a beautiful and sincere expression of the life and spirit of a people, and its creator was justified in calling it a poem.

The best evidence that Mistral is a true poet of the soil is the fact that his poems are known and loved by thousands who cannot read them in the language in which they were written. The poet of the soil does best when he writes in the idiom of his people. Burns recognized this truth, and so did Synge. Mistral, too, recognized it, but he met a problem much greater than that of Burns or Synge. Their people used a dialect; his spoke a distinct language, once a language of highest repute but dropped, at the time of Mistral's boyhood, to the level of a vulgar *patois*. The young poet did not hesitate in making up his mind. He determined to make it a part of his work of patriotism to restore to the native language of Provence its former dignity. This determination met the strong encouragement of Joseph Roumanille, the oldest of the *Félibre* poets and Mistral's teacher and lifelong friend. The success which the *Félibres* met in carrying out this Dante-like scheme does not concern us in estimating Mistral as a universal poet of the soil. What does concern us is that his work soon attracted attention outside of Provence and that translations had to be provided. It is through these translations that Mistral is broadly known. One of the best tests of a work of literature is how well it will stand in translation. We undoubtedly miss much of Mistral when we read him in French or in any other language than Provençal; at the same time we know that we are getting much.

The best evidence, again, of the sincerity of Mistral as a patriot is the reverence, hardly short of worship, with which he is remembered in Provence. If he had not shown such an abundant love for his people, they in turn would not have honored him so highly. That a prophet is without honor in his own country is indeed not true in the case of Mistral. In the year 1909 a grand *fête* was held in Arles in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Mirèio*. All Provence, from aristocrat to peasant, entered with zest into the celebration, and the memory of it will be treasured for long. A statue of the poet was unveiled. Calvé was there to sing his *Magali*. Mounet-Sully was brought down from the *Comédie Française* to recite favorite passages from his poems. A gala performance

of Gounod's opera of *Mireille* was given in the old Roman arena, with a cast of the most prominent singers in France. It was a tribute of Provence to her aged poet while he was still alive. Now, nine years after his death, there are tributes to his memory. They are simpler, perhaps, than the *fête* of 1909; but they are more sincere, because they are as likely as not to be initiated by a group of peasants. Actual pilgrimages are made to his home and grave in Maillane, and to places mentioned in his poems. By far the most honored persons in Provence to-day is Madame Mistral, the widow of the poet. The Courts of Love and the Floral Games, which the *Félibres* hold from time to time, are now devoted mainly to recitations from the works of Mistral; and there seems to be no marked regret that there is no poet in Provence to-day upon whose shoulders his mantle could fall. So much could not be expected of the gods. Charles Rieu, a peasant, is considered the most significant poet now writing in Provençal, and he is always thought of as a lesser member of Mistral's group. Instead of fostering new production, the Provençaux prefer to remain under the influence of the magnetic personality of Mistral and to revel in the idea that he was truly one of them. They follow with renewed devotion all the old customs which he loved and praised. The patriotism which was so deeply a part of his being has been translated into them. He revealed Provence in a new light, and now they love it in the same mystic way in which he loved it. But they do not forget to whom belongs the reward for the revelation.

When I was at Avignon, I had a talk with an antiquarian, an intelligent old woman, who had known Mistral very well. "Provence", she said, "has given three great names to modern art,—Alphonse Daudet, Paul Cézanne, and Frédéric Mistral. Daudet went away to Paris and made fun of us. But we love him because he was so clever and witty and genial, and he really never forgot that he was a Nîmois. Besides, he wrote the most exquisite Provençal prose. Cézanne! Well, we don't understand his paintings. What he accomplished by his sojourns at Les Baux we don't know. His sunshine is just as much that of Brittany as of Provence. But Mistral! He was different. He was a Pro-

vençal in every way. He put our real spirit into his poetry. If you want to know Provence, learn Mistral. You will not only be studying Provence, but the one modern poet who is worthy of a place with Homer and Vergil and Dante." Such an opinion is that of Provence as a whole to-day. If it shows more enthusiasm than critical judgment, it nevertheless expresses the truth of devotion. The patriot and the poet of the soil could not have a more worthy monument.

VERNON LOGGINS.

New York.

WALKING

I know now what is beyond the barn
That till to-day shut one horizon in,
I took a road that went the other way
And roundabout came back where I had been.

There is a grassy path through fern-green fields
Where buttercups and devil's-paint-brush grow,
And the foundations of an old house
Between tall pine-trees standing in a row.

There is a muddy pond where horses drink,
And one stood motionless against the hill,
Beside the fence a stretch of woods begins,
And there is wind that never will be still.

EDITH HORTON.

Ithaca, New York.

THE PESSIMISM OF ROBERT BROWNING

It is a case of his own *Time's Revenges* with a vengeance that a poet of last century should have to be accredited in this, not because of a certain conspicuous item in his reputation, but in spite of it, and that, coincident with this change of venue, he may be found by a new trial to be not entirely guilty after all of that which in the meantime has become somewhat less of a badge of honor than an inglorious brand. And it is a fair sample of the inept judgments bestowed upon our creative artists that Browning has been roundly applauded not only as an optimist but as one of the robust variety. In this matter an adaptation might be made of Chesterton's distinction regarding Bret Harte's American humor. Browning is undeniably robust; he is an ostensible optimist; but his is not a robust optimism, even what there is of it. Yet wherein is optimism a virtue, and how raised to the *n*th power by becoming robust? It is all a matter of cosmic attitude, displayed in many shifting combinations.

For the sake of analysis the actors and audience in our planetary drama—being one and the same—may be divided into four groups according to their respective interpretations of the nature of the play. These, by the way, do not include those children of earth who accept existence at its face-value and perceive on the stage only a pageant of rapidly dissolving views. The others all discern the eternal strife behind this mechanical masque, but to them it speaks a various language, since varied is their estimation of the two opposing forces,—humanity on one side and on the other the fate that determines its destiny.

The first of these groups by a *tour de force* called faith regards fate as essentially benevolent, operating toward an ultimate triumph of humanity's worthiest ambitions. To them the fight is really only a sham battle devised partly for its exciting entertainment and partly for the useful exercise it instigates. The play, therefore, to these flabby optimists, is a romantic comedy or a highly spiced melodrama with the happy ending guaranteed in advance.

The second division is convinced that destiny is temperamentally malevolent. Its members focus their gaze so intently on the inevitable disaster that they are unable to see any value in the episodes leading to it. Man is a worm whose whole duty is so to wriggle as to produce the least danger and the most comfort to himself. He is both finite and abject, unstable, irrational, indulgent to his lowest self, ample only in excuses for his failure. What can his behavior be but futile at best and sinister at worst? So argue the flabby pessimists, to whom the play is a sorry farce, a satiric comedy.

The third class is disillusioned without cynicism, for it admits man to be at least a foe worthy of fate's steel, not sublime indeed, yet not ridiculous. The worm sometimes turns with a splendid if pitiful defiance. The slave does contrive to make his bricks without straw and to rear noble monuments withal. To these, the robust pessimists, the spectacle of a patient, resourceful defence made by a drafted army foreordained to defeat in an unequal contest, is a pure high tragedy.

There remain the robust optimists. These are frankly agnostic as to metaphysics, but have compensating mundane certitudes. Against man's sufferings and losses they pit his earthly gains and satisfactions, genuine even if partial and fleeting, and his achievements of mind and spirit. He does experience gratification and reward, and he can turn his adversity to the fine uses of creating and testing the one thing of prime importance,—human character. The human creature may not be master of his fate, but he may be and often is captain of his soul. His dynamic energy, his amazing zest for work, his capacity for sympathy and adoration, his ability to sacrifice the lower to the higher, his intelligence in discoveries and inventions, his humor and sagacity, his appreciation of beauty,—these qualities serve to make man the protagonist in his uncatalogued drama, and to render negligible the nature of his antagonist and the outcome of the plot.

It happened that the most massive and many-sided poet of the nineteenth century belonged to a generation so infatuated with its own notion of optimism that it mistook a glittering surface for a vasty deep, encouraged by stimulating approval the

expansion of that surface, and cared too little for what might lie beneath it to investigate. It was sufficient to cull a few prominent pronouncements and air them freely:—

'God's in his heaven.' 'Life's no blot nor blank; it means intensely and means good.' 'The mere living is fit to employ all the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy.' 'Leave time for dogs and apes; man has forever.' 'There shall never be one lost good.' 'The evil is null, is naught.' 'What began best can't end worst.' 'Earth's young significance is all to learn.' 'The best is yet to be.' 'I know there shall dawn a day.'

So far, so good, and why seek further? Indeed, from the Victorian point of view to go farther would be to fare worse, whereas the twentieth century may sally forth on this excursion fearless of its findings because it is unencumbered with an hypothesis to be confirmed. The twin discoveries bagged from this hunt report that Browning's optimism is romantic and labored, his pessimism realistic and spontaneous. Moreover, the latter in actual amount outweighs the former a hundred to one. From the youthful agonizings of *Pauline* to the aged sadness of the *Prologue to Asolando* the poet pours forth a forceful stream of testimony to the unlivableness of life. His indictments are specific and general, and are filed against both camps in the cosmic battle,—the visible pygmy and the hidden giant.

The historical character Paracelsus is but a transparent mask for the youth of Camberwell, himself just awakening to the masked nature of his beautiful universe. We may be God's creatures, he exclaims, but it is certain that He takes no pride in us. Life is a poor cheat, a stupid bungle, a wretched failure, and he for one protests against it and hurls it back in scorn. With equal scorn he hurls back also the sustaining solace of immortality. Why should this world be only a makeshift, a mere foil to some fine life to come? Man must be fed with angels' food, forsooth, the unsubstantial diet of belief in his own divinity. But in that he flatters himself, for his own strongest driving emotion is not love but hate; his mind is nothing but disease and his natural health ignorance. Blind and endless is the struggle with evil, futile the frenzy to instruct those who lack the capac-

ity to understand. Most eloquent of all is Paracelsus over the fallacy of a beneficent Providence. Let us smile at the idea that we have vast, God-given longings, satiable by lust or gold, or that we see the divine will characterized on heaven's vault that he who lifts his eyes may read. For himself, he knows as much of any such will as knows the dumb and tortured beast the will of his stern master from the perplexing blows that plague him every way. (So later said Ixion and Ferishtah's Camel Driver.) He waxes ironic over God's intimations that fail rather in clearness than in energy, as did Caliban in due time with his sneer at Setebos:—

Not He!

There is the sport; discover how or die!

Not more bitter is Thomas Hardy over the treatment of his Tess by the President of the Immortals than is this mediæval rebel over a world of Durbeyvilles:—

You are to understand that we who make
Sport for the gods, are hunted to the end.

Nay, more:—

Jove strikes the Titans down,
Not when they set about their mountain-piling,
But when another rock would crown the work.

What could be left but the desire he expresses that the farce be quickly shuffled through to its dispiriting end? And does he then recant when on the approach of that end he has a consoling vision of the evolutionary nature of existence, in the grand perspective of which these partial evils are seen merging into a final good? Or is this an anticipation of Francis Furini, of whom Browning suggested—

That, on his death-bed, weakness played the thief
With wisdom, folly ousted reason quite. ?

Or perchance this whole poem, together with *Pauline*, *Straford*, and *Sordello*, the quartette forming a symphony on the theme of failure, is to be taken as a lad's sowing of his pessimistic wild oats. Did not their author recover from these growing pains and emerge into a cheerful and wholesome manhood? Was not his fifth production, the gladsome *Pippa Passes*, at once a confession of error and a peace-offering?

One might suppose so, for the passage of Pippa is so brilliant that it dazzles into obscurity the significance of what she passes. What is the crass actuality among "Asolo's Four Happiest Ones"? What is discovered about those four types of love from whose hierarchy of radiance the lonely child was to extract a reflected light to illumine her ungraced path withal? Adultery, murder, ingratitude, vulgarity blasting by a vile practical joke an artist's exquisite idealism, another young idealist made the tool of selfish demagogues, a high ecclesiastic hearkening to a scoundrel's malignant plots,—these choice samples of human behavior, amalgamated by a rubble of spies, police, and women of the street, form a cross-section of life as it is lived. These incidents are verifiable realism. The violent wrenching of the situations whereby all the sinners are saved on the brink of their respective perditions by the accidental appropriateness of the passing Pippa's songs is sheer fantastic romanticism. You can chant "All's well with the world," so long as you skirt the outside edges of it like an angel unaware; and you can make the world well by performing a row of miracles. *Voilà!*

Yet was Browning at this time only in his early maturity. What from the ripened sagacious writer of his epic masterpiece? It is indeed in *The Ring and the Book* that the poet reaches the peak of his own mountain, and it is from this height that the panorama appears like the Dark Tower district in *Childe Roland*. Fools and knaves in high places and low, greed, cynicism, wanton torture and selfish refusal of aid to the helpless, result in a vortex of overwhelming catastrophe submerging guilty and innocent alike. This is redeemed only by the intrepid initiative of a terrified, hounded girl, the chivalry of a priest suddenly sobered out of his troubadour gayety, and the insight of a wise and saintly pope. Even this partial redemption is ignored in the conclusion to the whole matter, which is a strange reversal or nullification of what little compensation has survived. We are not to draw from the vindication of Pompilia's purity the inference that all truth triumphs in the end. "Learn one lesson hence," warns Browning emphatically, and recites that lesson as the utter nothingness of human testimony and estimation. With which whistling down the wind of mortal veracity and

judgment, the curtain falls on a tragedy of truly Stygian gloom and ruin irremediable.

This great poem, however, momentous as it is, is Browning's antepenultimate. Is not that final *Epilogue* the last word? Years before the poet had said: "I shall know, being old". Now that he is old, what does he know? Quite literally, he does not know what he is talking about; for his theme is himself and the portrait drawn is so subtly specious, mistaking as it does disposition for character and accomplishment, that it is invalidated as a trustworthy report.

In the meantime there are many other pictures of another color. There is the tale of the mischievous Apollo, who wickedly converts the Three Fates from bitterness to blitheness by the judicious gift of Bacchus's flowing bowl. Even the dread divinities, as well as our human Tam o'Shanter, become glorious only when their minds are drowned in drink. And as Burns found retrospect drear and prospect fearful, so Browning (in his *Bean-stripe*) sees "humanity reeling beneath its burden," for—

Life, from birth to death,
Means—either looking back on harm escaped,
Or looking forward to that harm's return
With tenfold power of harming.

Not more pensive is Koheleth over the vanity of human wishes, not more caustic is Omar over the futility of human hopes, than the author of *Earth's Immortalities*, *Misconceptions*, *The Last Ride Together*, *In a Year*. Nowhere are there more poignant studies of the disastrous failure that comes more from a man's stars than from himself, than those presented in most of Browning's dramas and in many of the narrative poems.

As for the humanity that tries to shape its own ends, or does not even try,—“Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as well undone,”—the record of its “centuries of folly, noise and sin” is pithily summarized in *Love Among the Ruins*:—

Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

In the aggregate these beings arouse in Browning only contempt, a sentiment he has illustrated a dozen or more times by sarcastic descriptions of mobs and crowds; this low opinion offset by no brief whatever for earth's inhabitants in the lump and by very few instances of high personal distinction. Out of his battalion of men and women the poet produces a scant corporal's guard of the spiritual aristocracy, and of these none is nobly triumphant: all meet with defeat or a discounted victory. Out of man's weakness springs his selfishness and from this under pressure are derived his deceitfulness, injustice and cruelty. Strafford, Luria, Mildred Tresham and Henry Mertoun, Anael the Druse, Léonce Miranda, the Duchess of Ferrara, are some of the many victims of this human incapacity for the large perception and the sane course, whereby the innocent and often the superior are sacrificed to the blind or the vicious.

What, then, says this present generation when asked to give a candidate for immortality a propelling push along the twentieth century? It is a dubious business for any individual to assume the prophetic rôle, but perhaps the consensus of thoughtful and candid opinion would voice itself somewhat as follows.

Robert Browning, as we define our terms, you look to us like a good normal mixture of the optimistic and the pessimistic, not, however, distinguished by robustness in either attitude. And since to us pessimism is no longer identified with the morbid and pathological, nor is optimism granted a monopoly of sanity and truth, you gain on the whole more than you lose by a re-evaluation.

For the tremendous popular approval that the optimistic theory has always enjoyed we account on psychological rather than ethical grounds. The universal prejudice in its favor comes from our natural impulse to elevate a biological asset to a moral plane. Man has become an expert at making a virtue out of his necessity.

Reconciliation with the life he has to live is as primal a necessity as food, shelter, and companionship. The gratification of that instinct is as wise, under similar restrictions, as is the satisfaction of the others. It is precisely as virtuous as any other act of self-preservation, and not a whit more to be imputed to us for righteousness.

Accordingly, Robert Browning, the things about you for which we do not greatly care are those for which you were blue-ribboned by your own generation. They have been allowed by default ever since, but you will now have to begin living them down. And conversely, what we prize are the darker streaks in your "veined humanity", not for their darkness, but for their richness, depth, and truth. We cannot be terribly impressed by your vaunted discovery that when you stoop you pluck a posy and when you stand and stare all's blue, since obviously if you had chanced to be stooping over the desert sands or staring at a thunderstorm, your botanizing would have been less bonny and your sky-gazing less blithe. We take little stock in the mighty to-do you make to establish your wishes as facts, your zeal in nursing your hope to keep it warm.

"Take away love," sings Fra Lippo Lippi, "and our earth is a tomb." Take away also material comfort, scope for healthful activity, recompense for effort, and religious faith, and what is our earth but a charnel-house? Yet hordes of your fellow-beings are doomed to live and die on a minimum physical and spiritual ration, and few indeed are endowed with your *æs triplex* of happy environment, buoyant disposition, and naive theology. Since life for you never was reduced to its lowest terms, you naturally are not qualified to grapple with ultimates. Yet even you reiterated a score of times this admission:—

I must say—or choke in silence—"Howsoever came my fate,
Sorrow did, and joy did nowise—life well weighed—preponderate."

Here you touch the responsive chord, Robert Browning, and for this shall you be saved. Not for your love of the garish day, of shawms and trumpets, of C major and the Mode Palestrina, do we welcome and speed you on, but for the wistful minor of your *Toccata*, the ineffable unfulfillment of your *Campagna*, your confession that our joy may be three parts pain and dearly bought at that with strain and throe, your recognition that this curse will come upon us: to see our idols perish. In your redoubtable harrying of evil and doubt through Bishop Blougram, Bernard de Mandeville, Mihrab Shah, and lesser lights, we see more of an oratorical gesture than a pugilistic blow, but in the

embarrassed wondering of Karshish and in the scornful groping of Cleon—who “sees the wider but to sigh the more”—we find the simple, sincere handclasp of human fellowship. It is not your David of inspired prophecy, but the young shepherd who would suffer for him whom he loved that we love. And more than Ben Ezra, prating of “plastic circumstance”, do we trust del Sarto’s “So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!”

This aspect of you we appreciate not because we love mirth and blessed assurance less, but honesty more. It is not that we revel in misery and enjoy our poor health. We too “desire joy and thank God for it”, although we do not expect Him to furnish it on demand. Our eyes and ears also take in their dole, our brain treasures up the whole, our heart beats that it is good to live and learn; only we are beginning to be more concerned that we learn aright.

It is when you celebrate the heroisms and loyalties of the ambiguous creatures, discouragingly weak and astoundingly strong, summoned into this life; it is when you sing of the beauty and the wonder and the power of this world; that you enter into our common human heritage of grief and bliss and mystery, and render it more luminous and endurable. And thus from your manifold pages we shall select and hold parley with *Certain Poems of Importance*, enshrining them along with *Dover Beach*, *Gloucester Moors*, and *Pulvis et Umbra*.

FRANCES THERESA RUSSELL.

Leland Stanford Junior University.

HYMN TO BACCHUS

(From the Greek of Sophocles' *Antigone*, lines 1115-1152)

Deity summoned by many names, Semele's dear delight,
Child of the Theban maid and Zeus, who thunders loud in his
might!

Guarder of Italy's fertile land,
Ruler of Deo's sacred strand,
Thronged Eleusis! O Bacchus, come!
Dweller in Thebes, the Bacchantes' home,
Close to Ismenus' gliding stream, where the seed of the dragon
sprung!

Thee doth the smoky flame of the torch, with its lurid glare,
reveal
High on the craggy peak where nymphs to the hollow cavern
steal.

Thou art seen by Castalia's rills.
Thee do the ivy-mantled hills,
Headlands green with the vine, send down
Into the streets of the Theban town.
"Euoi, Bacchus!" the mystic shout on the still night air is flung.

This is the city that thou dost love better than all the rest,
Thou and thy mother, the bride of Zeus, with her lightning-
smitten breast.

Now by plague it is visited;
Therefore come, with thy healing tread,
Over Parnassus' gentle slope, or over the moaning sea.

Thou who ledest in mazy dance stars with the breath of fire,
Thou who hearest the strange wild cries of the night rise higher
and higher;

Son of Zeus, let thy light appear!
Lord, with thy votaries now draw near,
Thyads that, maddened, all night long, revel and sing to thee!

CORNELIA C. COULTER.

Vassar College.

PROPORTION AND INCIDENT IN JOSEPH CONRAD AND ARNOLD BENNETT

The appeal of the exotic, of the far-off and unusual, in literature is of long establishment and it is to this in a measure that Conrad owes his popularity among more uncritical readers. Yet it is seriously to be doubted that any one of these feels at the end of *Lord Jim*, for instance, that he has done no more than read a tale. Perhaps it would be clearer to put this in another form. Let us say that in living vicariously through Lord Jim's experiences, our uncritical reader has gathered into himself sensations of an unusual consistency, of an intensity not at all commonplace. He must feel that if he had lived this life of Tuan Jim's under any but Conrad's guidance it would not have yielded him an indefinable, yet to him very palpable, richness. If he stopped to analyze, he might find that in other exotic tales his affection was conditioned by the unusual character of the experiences, while with Conrad the fact that his harvest of feeling was gathered under extraordinary circumstances is not important. For, under these exotic episodes, he is made to perceive the throb of universal human life, the same pulsings which determine the existence of his friends and of himself, yet which are ordinarily less perceptible. It is not that Conrad reveals the tides and rips which underlie human life; it is rather that he suggests them more strongly, more convincingly. If they were revealed, we might not, indeed, recognize them. We feel the suggestion of them, however, just as, more or less subconsciously, we feel them in life, save that they are then mixed with so much of pseudo-reality, of false permanence. These pseudo-realities and false permanences do not impress us really; the genuine manifestations of what is behind life do. Discrimination between the two is not easy; yet when it is done, it is more easily recognized and we recognize it in Conrad. Neither is the presentation of the genuine, once caught, easy, yet with this accomplishment, too, we credit the author of *Lord Jim*.

It is interesting to inquire into the method, if it be a method, whereby the singular effect of having lived intensely through

some of Jim's experience, at least of having sympathized intensely with him, as Marlow did, is achieved. As a matter of fact, Marlow's sympathy and understanding approaches in richness of effect the experience itself. To ascribe Conrad's success to so comprehensive a source as his sense of proportion seems to make it no less elusive. Possibly it does not bring it any nearer solution, but that is because all the faculties which we involve in the term "sense of proportion" contribute to this magnificent literary gift.

Lord Jim lives for us and we share in Marlow's affection because, like Marlow, we see something of ourselves in the mate of the *Patna*. But when we stand off and look at Jim through less understanding eyes, those of some of the men with whom he came into contact, excluding Marlow, Stein, and Brierly, his action in jumping from the *Patna* stamps him as unadmirable, as standards of the world go. A coward with many of the romantic ideas of a girl, a girl's sensibility,—what is there to redeem such a character? Why do we tolerate him, much less look upon him with tender regard? It is because we are shown through the medium of another sensibility, unusually fine, that he is tossed upon the same sea with ourselves. We see how easy it would be to fail as he failed, how irrevocable such failure would seem. We have ourselves been pursued and reminded as he was; we have been at odds with our surroundings, our world, our very selves, as he was.

This is not conveyed in bold, undetailed strokes. It cannot be so done any more than Hamlet could be presented in a one-act play. It is an effect arrived at through a series of minutiae, magnified, subtly emphasized, repeated with some variation. And it is in such a process that we detect the operation of Conrad's sense of proportion. Before he could write the story at all, it was necessary that he see Jim's life after the *Patna* affair in an unusual way. He did not say that the man was an ass to conduct himself as he did, to let the affair grow like a tumor in his consciousness, and then dismiss him as unworthy of attention. Of course, it is nothing extraordinary in an artist to do this, but it seems to me worthy of mention for two reasons. First, it is easy to overlook the fact that if we were to meet Jim, we should

very likely let him pass unnoticed. Conrad's principle of selective magnifying seems to have its index, as well as its source, in this rather obvious artistic attribute.

Events of slight apparent importance assume large proportions; trifling incidents prove to be pregnant with drama to which they never actually gave birth, a detached existence. They would be overlooked did not Conrad perceive in them "the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment."¹ They are manifestations to him of the boiling surge that underlies life, the truth behind the appearance of our world. Let us take but one of many instances of Jim's strange whim. He is in the life-boat, having left the *Patna*, alone in the bow, unconsciously tense for an attack from his companions at the stern. His mind is dazedly trying to measure the extent of the disaster within itself. He had jumped from the ship, and that jump damned him to himself,—it was irrevocable. Suddenly he feels a desire to swim back to the spot where the *Patna* supposedly sank; he does not know why,—he sees no use in it. But the chief, compelling feature of his wish is that it shall be the exact spot where she went down; not here, nor there next to her grave, but the precisely identical spot through which she plunged. Conrad uses a page in presenting this at first and refers to it again more than once. Why does he use it and why does he emphasize it out of all proportion to its superficial importance? The answer is to be felt rather than defined. Conrad himself could not, I believe, answer the question at once, although he makes Marlow ask: Why the exact spot? It was an important thought, because, however irrationally, it played an important part in Jim's state of mind at the time. It was an unaccountably significant tendency in his mental turmoil. Stein said, apropos of a butterfly marked with infinite delicacy, that nature was the balancing of overwhelming forces. When Jim jumped, he destroyed an adjustment and his preoccupation with swimming to the exact spot was evidence of these forces jogged from repose. Reason discards the evidence as trifling, but temperament, to which Conrad makes his appeal,

¹ Preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

knows. Reason demands that such knowledge shall be articulate or forfeit its claim to validity; temperament takes such matters on trust. It takes them on the basis of their existence and power, not upon the basis of an explanation of their existence and power. That the significance of the item is felt suffices. The marvel is not that an artist recognizes this, but that he presents it so that we seem vaguely to recognize it. He leads us to feel and accept its import without the clamor of reason for an accounting.

Conrad has been called a novelist's novelist, but such a title is, I think, unusually misleading. One novelist is apt to have a keener appreciation of a colleague's technique and the end to which it is directed than the man on the street, and it is to this fact that the misnomer may be ascribed. Suppose the casual reader does not understand his technique, that does not, obviously, make Conrad an esoteric artist, if there are such. To be sure, Conrad's inverted, often discursive, method of telling a story cuts him off from certain readers, but it is not because they want to understand his technique and find themselves baffled. It is rather because they do not find the method an easy vehicle for what it is intended to convey. In this, of course, Conrad is to a certain extent unfortunate; but if he feels, as he must, that his technique is the one by which he may best reach those temperaments susceptible of impression, he is justified. Those who are repelled by his technique are not capable of receiving his ideas in the manner he chooses to use. To change the manner would be to change the appeal.

In *Lord Jim* we first learn of the central figure as a water-clerk, and a good one too, who seems capable of prospering, yet does not even stick to one job. After some pages, we are told of the *Patna* affair, the trial, etc., but the story weaves back and forth between causes and effects, skipping over intermediate steps, picking them up later. Such a method may again be explained, without strain, on the basis of Conrad's sense of proportion. Suppose for a moment that you had gone out to Conrad's fairly extensive corner of the world and had run across Jim as a water-clerk. You might be interested. He would, for no apparent reason, suddenly throw up his berth and disappear; you

would pick up a bit of the *Patna* story and wonder if there were a connection; you would find Jim again at another port, and then perhaps you would meet Marlow. How much more emphasis the various parts of the story would eventually receive in this way! You had seen and wondered at an effect; you had speculated as to a cause. Then you are told. The cause impresses you either because you had nearly divined it or because you had had no idea of it; the effect with all its details becomes far more significant in memory, for its antecedents were obscure at the time,—you were unprejudiced in your observation of it. So it seems to me that this aspect of Conrad's technique is, in a way, better suited to the presentation of the interests he finds in life. It seems to throw the emphasis upon those things which emphasize the mystery of life to him,—to re-create for the reader the astonishment he finds in little things.

When he mentions Brierly in connection with Jim's trial, he immediately becomes interested in him as a character and assumes, unconsciously perhaps, that we too are interested. Brierly is part of this same life that embraces Jim and, since your interest in Jim is interest in that life, Brierly has his share likewise, he seems to say. Added to which, Brierly was a strange chap: strong, self-reliant, scornful of dependence; then, within a week after the trial, he has thrown himself overboard. What does that mean and what, if any, is the connection? That is the sort of digression, often carried a step or two farther, to which objection is made. It has to all intents very little to do with Jim. Perhaps that very fact makes it appeal to Conrad. Here is a man, the very opposite of Jim, unromantic, tried and found complete according to his own standards, without self-reproach; a man who gives up for no apparent reason and throws himself, after deliberate preparation, into the sea. What connects two so dissimilar? Courage? Cowardice? What? That interests Conrad and, what is more, he makes it interest us as a part of the work of mysterious forces acting and counteracting beneath the surface. It is important for its inexplicability; it is astonishing, plausible, significant.

This is, as I conceive it, the reason for the intensity of effect in Conrad's work,—for the feeling of having suffered the influence

of a genuine experience which he so often leaves with the reader: his sense of proportion. To be able to see these various manifestations of the hidden stream of life,—more particularly, to see Jim not merely as a coward who jumped, but as a cork upon this stream,—this is easily ascribable to his perception. But Conrad goes beyond this. He can so select and present the trifles, the tiny blisters which evidence the heat within, as to convey the effect of some personal contact with strange influences through his pages. This is the more effective because in life it is through the trifles that we are made to feel the ferment upon which we live. Conrad catches these and charges them with an import in the scheme of things that we could not find for ourselves.

It is not simply that Conrad, like any other artist, puts himself in the place of his character and assumes the hero's sense of proportion along with his other attributes. He must do this, to be sure, but he does more. A narrator other than Marlow might conceivably regard Jim's desire to return to the exact spot where the *Patna* went down as strange; he might even go so far as to say that he understood that sort of unaccountable and trifling wish in a crisis. The fact that the idea assumed tremendous importance to Jim at the time might be interesting without significance. To Marlow and to Conrad its momentary monopolization of Jim's thoughts and its effects give it the nature of a symbol standing for some cosmic secret. Its appeal in Jim's sense of proportion at the time makes it worthy of appeal to a true sense of proportion. Its importance to Jim makes it important in the general order of things. Such a method tends to create in the reader this feeling of having lived and profited by some of Jim's life. These trifles which affect him out of proportion to their apparent weight are the same ones, we feel sure, to which we would attend in his position. Marlow was moved to profound sympathy with him, and so are we. Conrad hammers us with the same series of forces, reproduced, which hammered Jim, and their comparative isolation enhances the effect. Thus, in his own definition of the novel, Conrad gives us "a conviction of our fellow-men's existence strong enough to take upon itself a form of imagined life clearer than reality." He attempts "to render the highest

kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its very aspect."² And in this endeavor he acts upon the belief that "There is not a place of splendor or a dark corner of the earth that does not deserve if only a passing glance of wonder and pity."² The art of fiction, then, is serious for it deals with the details of a serious business: life. But it does not seem that Conrad stands free of ironical implication in what he presents according to his sense of proportion. In fact, it may be this that makes every "corner of the earth . . . deserve . . . a passing glance . . . of pity."

To Conrad "the real significance of crime is in its being a breach of faith with the community of mankind," for "we exist only in so far as we hang together."³ In jumping from the *Patna*, Jim broke faith with mankind,—he shattered the tacitly and imperfectly understood covenant of solidarity. But he thought he was saving himself; at least the impulse to jump was one of self-preservation. The irony of the affair was that in casting off his communal obligation and striking out for himself, he broke his future. Fate, the powers of life, whatever you choose to call them, have conditioned man's success by the extent to which he maintains the solidarity of men, yet they have endowed him with a strong impulse to act for himself in a crisis, carefully veiling the fact that to follow this impulse is not the way out. They have ordained that "we exist only in so far as we hang together" and they have made the impulse to preserve this existence impel Jim toward an independent action that is to jeopardize this same existence. A more compact, efficient ironical invention would be difficult. This seems to be an aspect of Conrad's philosophy. And his sense of proportion is somewhat exposed in the manner in which he carries this idea from such an important event, whose consequences affect Jim's life to its very end, to a mere incident.

Marlow is leaving the trial with an acquaintance who stumbles over a native hound and says something about a yellow cur. Jim is standing near and turns to Marlow in a rage. He loses self-control and demands satisfaction for an insult. Marlow points

² Preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

³ *Lord Jim*.

to the discolored mongrel. The irony again! Jim, thinking to defend himself in Hotspur fashion, has laid himself wide open. In his desire to stand straight and defiant he has fallen over backward and is helpless. This trivial incident is another evidence of the same ironic combination of forces which appears in his jump from the *Patna*. He gives himself up to a course of action that defeats the very end toward which it is directed and leaves him in a deeper depression. He—nobody else—undoes himself. That is the principle, and whether it is manifest in the *Patna* affair and its consequences, covering a period of years, or whether it simply stirs for an instant in the yellow cur episode, it is none the less important in Conrad's eyes. Either event stands as the index to the principle, and we feel that there is no difference in intensity of import between the two; the difference between them lies in the time element and the amount of copy they provide. They differ as two trains, one from station to station, the other from coast to coast, do: as evidence of the principle of steam transportation they are equally significant.

'Granted that the foregoing is true,' I can imagine a commentator saying, 'what does it mean? What have you proved? Isn't it all very vague?' Disregarding any vagueness I may have brought to the subject, I fancy I find an answer in the illuminating Preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*:—

We talk a little about the aim—the aim of art, which, like life itself, is inspiring, difficult—obscured by mists. It is not in the clear logic of a triumphal conclusion; it is not in the unveiling of one of those heartless secrets which are called the Laws of Nature. It is not less great, but only more difficult.

To arrest, for the space of a breath, the hands busy about the work of the earth, and compel men entranced by the sight of distant goals to glance for a moment at the surrounding vision of form and color, of sunshine and shadows; to make them pause for a look, for a sigh, for a smile—such is the aim, difficult and evanescent, and reserved only for a very few to achieve. But sometimes, by the deserving and the fortunate, even that task is accomplished. And when it is accomplished—behold!—all the truth of life is there: a moment of vision, a sigh, a smile—and the return to an eternal rest.

A "moment of vision" suggestive of "all the truth of life" is to be found in its vividness among the seemingly trivial. And Conrad seems endeavoring to intensify, emphasize, and protract these moments for us because none of them is unimportant. They are snatched from "the remorseless rush of time" and held up before "all eyes in the light of a sincere mood . . . to show life with its vibration, its color, its form; and through its movements, its form, and its color reveal the substance of its truth—disclose its inspiring secret: the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment."⁴ This is the purpose Conrad avows. I have quoted it in an attempt to show that it is likewise the purpose we may glean from his practice, the purpose implicit in the operation of his artistic method. It seems to explain his emphasis of the fragments, his sense of the importance of the brief incident, his sense of proportion; it seems to explain it as well as anything can be 'explained' in an avowed appeal to temperament over reason,—the 'explanation' of truths felt, rather than proved and therefore known.

Arnold Bennett is even more concerned than Conrad with the little things of experience. In such a novel as *Clayhanger* the great bulk of the work consists in such momentary glimpses of life. But the difference between Bennett and Conrad is the difference between land and sea and it may seem that an attempt to include the two in one paper will not induce unity. It is, however, with the purpose of expounding a few of the differences that this is written.

In *Clayhanger*, there is an incident of Darius's boyhood, when he began to earn what was then known as a living. He was due at the place of manufacture at an early morning hour, and the consciousness of this responsibility troubled his sleep. Suddenly he awoke, convinced of lateness, and rushed through the dark morning streets, only to find on arriving near his destination that he was two or three hours too early. He then retired to a pottery of some sort near by and, soothed by the warmth of the kilns, overslept the anxious hour.

⁴ Preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

Allowing for some loss in reproduction, the extreme vividness and power of this incident lies, as I see it, solely in its appeal by similarity to the experience of nine out of ten of those who read it. It reconstructs with fidelity at least one such occurrence in the life of any single reader. He is himself running through as echoing street, his heart apprehensive, unassured that his hour is not past. Then comes a relief that seduces him into a feeling of security. The incident lives in a competently stimulated memory. The story has thrown out a line that we have immediately made fast to our sympathies. We not only take greater interest in a character who has just now gone through an experience we know well, but we have also a pleasant sensation peculiar to a public representation of part of ourselves.

Suppose we compare Darius's morning sally with the episode of the yellow cur in *Lord Jim*, wherein Jim was cruelly led to reveal his weakness with nothing except himself and that very weakness to hold responsible. Why is the latter incident impressive? In spite of a certain similarity of appeal between the two, I do not think the force of impression in each case results from the same cause. It is true that in Jim's accidental revelation of himself and his consequent chagrin we feel a familiarity with the situation, although we may less readily admit it. Certainly, the scene is constructed on a plan which we have seen in operation, with which we have had contact. But it is something more than this.

It seems as though Conrad were pointing to this comparatively slight disturbance on the surface of life to say: 'There,—you see? an evidence of that same veiled principle, that same secret force that made him jump,—that makes his life so unaccountably fascinating, yet pitiful. Here it is again as it was there and will be yonder. It underlies and determines the poor chap's existence, don't you see?' In the incident he wants to reveal something behind. And if he can touch our own experience, give us something in common with his character, aside from the technical advantage of laying his tale more closely at our door, he stands a greater chance of making us feel what he feels in that incident. The principal aspect of his method, however, is to convey a moment of fragmentary vision into deeper things:

In Bennett the paramount concern is not with what may be revealed beyond. The value of the incident lies within itself entirely. It is related to what has gone before and what is to come after no more than any incident in a picaresque tale, for that is, after all, what *Clayhanger* amounts to, if it be permissible to take 'picaresque' out of the realm of action. Bennett's attention is for his characters as physical and psychic lives. Influences upon them seem to have their spring close at hand, so much so that we feel that he looks no further than the properties of the matter that makes up these beings. Youth is elasticity; age, poverty of resilience; and life the metamorphosis. Character buds, flowers, and ceases to be. All we know or need to know seems to be there before our noses. Bennett's chief desire is to make the casual moments vivid and reminiscent, to show that life is composed of no more than what we can perceive and have perceived in matter.

Bennett's vividness is achromatic; Conrad's is shot through with color. Both pursue a level, but Bennett's is of the commonplace while Conrad's is of the unusual. This is not to say that Bennett is without interest in or knowledge of the unusual and miraculous in life. Edwin's buoyancy in facing the world at the end of school, his inspection of the plumbing at the new house, Hilda's tenderness with Mr. Shushions, Darius's terrible transformation,—all such scenes have a strangeness about them that is intangibly impressive. But they are all governed by the material properties of the life in which they exist, and in consequence take on the material grey, untinted by anything inspirational. When we know that Mr. Shushions died in want, we know what upset Darius's balance; it is not inexplicable that the family should be at a loss to comprehend it, for they do not know what we do of the relations between the two men. It is that given combination of conditions that produces the observed results, nor need we look further than that combination. And upon this frame is draped an infinity of commonplace, familiar detail that introduces events into our consciousness just as unsensationally as life introduces them.

Conrad's level is one of tenseness and significance. Events appeal strongly to his sensibility, and in order to reproduce the

effect they have upon him, he must intensify and emphasize them for us, since he cannot increase our sensibility to them. He intensifies the incidents by charging them so highly that they crackle and hum when we find them; he emphasizes them by pondering them, coming back to them, and turning them in the light of the perception of more than one individual. The memory of an event recurs, long after it has happened, with a significance renewed or augmented in view of what has taken place since. It re-impresses him and he desires that it shall re-impress us likewise.

The two novelists maintain their respective levels consistently. Conrad does not write of his crises in a more intense vein than of his minor incidents, because they serve the same purpose: to stand for some current beneath the surface of life. He draws his casual occurrences up above the commonplace stream, although without abandoning the realistic touch in writing of them. Bennett, on the other hand, weights his crises down with the trappings of the ordinary. Neither author is monotonous in any sense implying dullness. In *Clayhanger* there is the comprehensive monotone of the factory town and the Clayhanger life, but it is presented in a detailed, various, and absorbing procession. Through his variety and vigor, his tendency to present action against a background of repose, and vice versa, his realistic writing, exotic setting, and temperamental appeal, Conrad escapes flagging of interest with his pregnant method.

Let us now briefly consider the interpretations which the two novelists make of life. If we are right in attributing to Bennett this idea of a biological basis, a materialistic core of life, it must follow that man's effort and life itself are futile. It would also seem that man's effort, his action, arose out of the matter that conditions life. Thus we have it that the motivation of life springs from those very material properties which make it futile. Carried to this (extreme, it may seem to some) degree, have we not here implied the same sort of irony that we find in Conrad? Jim is impelled to fruitless conduct by the very force that makes it fruitless; life is futile to Bennett because the very conditions which generate it destine it to oblivious and complete decay at last. To this extent there seems to be a similarity; but beyond, there is a difference.

It cannot be said that Conrad has gone farther than Bennett in not confining his world to matter. It would be nearer true, perhaps, to say that Bennett has explored beyond material bounds and found there nothing. Conrad, on the other hand, has passed beyond and discovered something so vast as to make any material finity inconsequential,—so mysterious as to make it a futile consideration. And it is the very fact that men do not deem it futile to consider material limits that conveys to him the greater irony. They pit their efforts against a force to whose invincible power they are blind, since they keep their eyes short of the objective. No one can presume to comprehend it, yet it is to be recognized as unconquerable. MacWhirr of *Typhoon* stands for this. He is sure that the combat is not vain. Brierly of *Lord Jim*, superb in his self-confidence, secure in his conviction that he is capable of handling himself in the face of any antagonist, is overcome from a quarter the existence of which he had not even suspected. Its direction was on no chart of his, and his charts, he thought, covered everything. You could never have convinced him, except possibly just before the end, when he, of all men, threw himself over the side of his ship, while Jim still clung to his buffeted life.

What, then, are we to think redeems life, makes it worth living for these men if they are convinced of their respective ideas? Conrad is made pessimistic by his sense of the division in the world and the blindness of man to the odds against him. But conditions are susceptible of alleviation. Endeavor in the direction of solidarity reduces the odds; blind division sprung from self-seeking increases them. "We exist only in so far as we hang together." To live, not blindly dashing oneself against shrouded walls, but with a realization of the nature of conditions, lends to life a taste, a thrill, a satisfaction that redeems it. He who acknowledges his impotence at first and who makes an enlightened effort to remedy his own and that of his fellows slightly,—he makes the best of life, and not a poor best either, as Marlow testifies. Marlow rolls life about on his tongue, and so does Stein, and their lives are not barren. They give to life and receive in return; those who try to take from life work destruction in which they themselves are not infrequently included.

To Bennett there is no such paramount need for coöperation. The redemption of life does not even seem connected with a true knowledge of conditions. Edwin's existence is not spiritually desolate. He apparently derives from certain experiences that which bears him along, buoys him up in compensation for the lower levels. As a matter of fact, if life is materially generated, sustained, and destroyed, there is, strictly, no spiritual need requiring satisfaction. And the best Edwin finds in life is no more than his inevitable reaction to it. Clog-dancing Florence, his drawing, his books, and later, Hilda, have their effect upon him. But at the last he will become old and deteriorate as his father and Mr. Shushions did. Nothing of the character we have seen develop will endure; nothing of it has been influenced by forces that have endured and will continue to do so. Bennett is concerned with the immediate matter of life, and it is another aspect of just such a concern that is blindness and the root of evil to Conrad. In Bennett it seems that to snatch what one can is the policy that will make life yield the only values it has: temporal ones. Conrad seems to see control from within and coöperation, with emphasis upon temperament, as the sources of richness.

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PAILLERON: A STUDY IN ROMANTIC PSYCHOLOGY

Among the many brilliant dramatists of the last century who labored to uphold the best traditions of the French stage, none presents a more baffling personality than Pailleron. Hailed from his first play as a writer of indubitable promise, he mounted rapidly the ladder of popularity until, with the success of his *chef-d'œuvre*, the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie*, he was thought to have found himself. Surely, France was once more to see a group of comedies comparable to the *Misanthrope*, *Tartuffe*, *Don Juan* and the *Femmes Savantes*. The honorary title of Nineteenth-Century Molière, bestowed by enthusiastic admirers, was found, however, to have been granted prematurely. The expected masterpieces did not come forth. Indeed, only two plays, and they of inferior quality, followed the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie*, and after a period of puzzled disillusion public as well as critics became resigned to the discovery that Pailleron lacked the power necessary to fulfil his apparent promise.

Attempts were made from time to time, on the part of various experts, to account for this failure, but none was really successful. The fault in each case we may ascribe to incorrect orientation of the focus of diagnosis. The critics made the mistake of assuming that the expectations aroused by Pailleron's early plays were justified, and that his inability to satisfy these hopes was the crux of the problem. They concentrated in consequence upon the last plays of his *répertoire*, only to have the solution of the difficulty elude them. Had they directed their attention, on the contrary, to the beginning of Pailleron's career and striven to find out whether the promise of the early plays was as great as it appeared, they would have stood a better chance of accounting for his inability to meet the expectations of his friends.

That no one thought of doing this may perhaps be laid to the extremely baffling quality of Pailleron's nature. All contemporaries are agreed that his was a most varied and subtle complex, and in this they were correct. The lightning-shifts, in his

brilliant comedies, from cynicism to idealism and back again, were enough to disconcert the coolest, and it is no wonder that even so sharp a critic as Wolff should have failed to penetrate the iridescent surface of Pailleron's personality. It remained, indeed, for the astute Parigot to produce the best diagnosis of the playwright's kaleidoscopic gift. Pailleron differed, he maintained, from all other writers for the stage in that he was primarily a man of the world; it was the *homme du monde*, Parigot asserted, that accounted for the *homme de lettres*, that explained the fascination of such comedies as the *Monde où l'on s'amuse*, *L'Age Ingrat*, or the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie*. The keenness of this diagnosis is undeniable, but where the accomplished critic failed, it seems to me, was in the relative importance which he ascribed to the *homme du monde* over against the *homme de lettres*. It is his contention, in brief, that Pailleron was essentially a man of the world who wrote plays rather than a writer of plays who occasionally dined out. The thesis will explain much that theretofore had been puzzling, but will not account for certain features of Pailleron's gift that cannot be ignored. From his first comedy, the *Parasite*—it was obvious to the dullest—that here was a writer who had at his finger-tips all the technical resources of the theatre, who, in other words, was at the outset an accomplished professional. Now, a man of the world who dabbled in the drama would betray in matters of craftsmanship the incompetence of the dilettante; the ideas in his plays might possibly be original, but the workmanship would sooner or later reveal the amateur.

Even this, however, becomes of secondary importance if we penetrate beyond questions of technique. The fact that Pailleron was a man of the world will obviously not account for his inferiority to the master dramatists of the *Grand Siècle*. There never lived, we should remember, a more accomplished man of the world than Racine. The difference in quality between their respective achievements springs clearly from the divergent nature of their complete personalities. A comparison with Racine will serve to bring out the fact that it is not the *homme du monde*, but the relationship between the *homme du monde* and the other elements of his individuality that accounts for Pailleron's *théâtre*.

The fundamental distinction between the two playwrights is not that one was a writer of tragedy, the other a writer of comedy, but that Racine was a neo-classicist, whereas Pailleron was a romanticist. The essence of this divergence is well illustrated by the opposing attitudes of the two schools toward what Diderot called the "civil war within the cave". Where the seventeenth century considered the cessation of the war as the basis of all achievement, the nineteenth century looked upon the continuation of the war as essential to artistic production. In other words, classical art is founded upon internal peace, romantic art upon internal conflict; the seeming complexity of the latter is as deceptive as is the seeming simplicity of the former. The difference in the relationship between artist and gentleman, the main factors in both Racine and Pailleron, is an apt illustration of the principle. In Racine there is no conflict whatever. Both artist and gentleman know their place, and live on terms of mutual goodwill; neither attempts to usurp the other's functions, because each respects the other. In fact, contact between artist and gentleman in Racine was only occasional and then always friendly. The gentleman was at all times willing to assist if the artist, in his work, needed information about the gentleman's domain (the subtleties of court life). On the other hand, if the gentleman, in his activities, needed the artist's help (when reading to Louis XIV, for instance) the artist was ready to proffer it. To this nicely balanced concord can we attribute such a masterpiece as *Athalie*, on the one hand, or the statement of Saint Simon on the other: "Rien du poète et tout de l'honnête homme."

In Pailleron, on the contrary, we find just the opposite. Everywhere do we meet the gentleman, everywhere do we see the interference of the social idler in the affairs of the artist. That is, the soul of Pailleron is the battle-ground for the never ceasing, never decisive struggle between artist and man of the world. Not only are these two elements within him mutually hostile, but, what is worse, they are very nearly of equal strength. The artist has the upper hand some of the time (the meticulous attention to detail proves that), but unfortunately he is not always strong enough to reduce the gentleman to submission upon occasions when the interests of art demand that submission.

It is to this internal conflict, which Pailleron was never able to suppress, that we may trace the seeming complexity of his work. The sudden shifts in point of view, the extreme mobility of attitude that testifies to a want of definite standards, are due to the writer's inability to maintain order in his own house. Each of the warring elements that compose his fascinating personality succeeds at the most unexpected moments in usurping the proscenium, and although the prominence may be brief, it is, by comparison with what has gone before, highly illogical. That this type of the illogical can be exceedingly piquant is a fact that will go far to explain the great popularity of his *répertoire* as well as the high expectations which it aroused. Both public and critics were misled by the nature of his variety; they thought it a homogeneous variety, whereas it was, on the contrary, heterogeneous. In short, Pailleron's nature (and in consequence his work) was essentially romantic in that it was a mixture rather than a compound. To what extent his *théâtre* was marred by the inability of the artist within him to subdue the gentleman, is a question that can be answered only after we fully appreciate the especial nature of the *homme du monde* of the nineteenth century.

The rise of the 'society man' in France occurred in the early years of the seventeenth century. To Madame de Rambouillet belongs the credit for the creation of the new ideal to replace the old ideal of chivalry, which was wallowing in the brutalities of decadence. By inventing the concept of 'preciosity' she succeeded little by little in effecting the transference of popular favor from the old pursuit of romantic adventure to the new, and more feminine, pursuit of social elegance. The foundation of this new pursuit is the idea of 'propriety', an idea wholly foreign to the ancients. The 'gentleman', according to the new code, must conform to a highly artificial standard. The decorum of the *honnête homme*, as he was called, consisted first: in abstaining from all excesses; second, in working up a smooth technique in the manipulation of all the social utilities that the active but superficial imagination of a woman could devise. The amusements of the Hôtel de Rambouillet included, it is true, an interest in things literary and scientific, but this interest was at

best a by-product of the new idea of propriety. The exaggerated pursuit of verbal nicety, by which the movement is best known, was in reality mundane rather than literary. A liking for art, science or metaphysics the *Précieux* certainly possessed, but, even so, their main interests remained primarily social and their chief aim in life was little more than the over-refined quest of urbanity. Devotion to this quest continued *in diminuendo* throughout the eighteenth century until the explosion of the Revolution swept away the old aristocracy.

The nineteenth century witnessed little by little (despite the rise of the *bourgeoisie*) a renaissance of the purely social ideal. That it should have been modified by the upheavals—political and economic—which France had undergone, was to be expected. The most notable change is the increasing restriction and the consequent growth in artificiality and futility of this ideal. The cause of the transformation is to be found in the almost complete exclusion of the socially prominent from the government. Frivolous as they were, the seventeenth-century gentlemen were the ruling class, and this fact gave them a certain vitality. In the nineteenth century, however, the control of the nation was theirs no longer, and in their disdain of the ambitious *bourgeoisie*, they withdrew more and more into themselves until they came to form an almost isolated group. This well-nigh total abstinence from the life going on about them forced them to find amusement in their own narrowing world, with the result that their interests concentrated more and more upon purely social activities. Thus it happened that a distinct though subtle change took place in the man of the world, a change reflected in his vocabulary. The word *convenances* of the *Grand Siècle* (which implied some intellectuality) gave way in the nineteenth to the word *chic* (which implied none). To be *chic* became the rallying cry of the 'upper classes', and by this was meant an elegant mastery of the purely social futilities. The cult of genuine ability, the belief that brains impart distinction to mundane activities, this creed of the *Grand Siècle* was almost completely discarded. The difference between the *honnête homme* of the seventeenth and the *homme du monde* of the nineteenth century amounted (in intellectual matters) to a

shift from the active to the passive, for whereas the *Précieux* created his standards, literary as well as social (e.g., the *convenances* of tragedy), the nineteenth-century *mondain* imported his standards when he did not inherit them. The poets, scholars and philosophers who frequented the seventeenth-century *salon* were obliged to accept the standards erected by a Madame de Rambouillet or a Chevalier de Méré and to do their best to conform to these standards. The *mondain* of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, might imitate his ancestors to the extent of inviting men of letters or learning to his house, but he let them bring their own standards; he held aloof from such things as beneath him socially, and at best accorded them no more than a contemptuous tolerance. The aristocracy of the nineteenth century abdicated in short, the government in things of the mind as it had the government in things of the world. The energy which the *honnête homme* had reserved for the domain of wit and intellect (and it was considerable) the *mondain* diverted to the polishing of his parlor technique or his sports. Constant practice in these important things did, we must admit, develop an especial virtuosity that no other class, whether intelligentsia or *tiers état*, could hope to rival. The *élite* felt, and felt rightly, that they had something which the intellectuals did not have, and which gave them an advantage over these disquieting people that the latter's greater mental power could not entirely offset. For we must remember that, however wide apart in other ways, the *élite* and *tiers état* are as one here, in their dislike of the *intellectuel*. The pride of both is naturally restive under the irony, pointed or genial, of their mental superiors, but the *élite* have over the common enemy an advantage not possessed by the *tiers état*. It is the realization of this fact, that he is 'smart' and that the 'intellectual' is not, that has enabled the fashionable to transvalue the frank hostility of the 'man in the street' toward the 'highbrow' into the more elegant emotion of bored contempt.

The result of all this is a new kind of obscurantism, social rather than religious. Indeed, the creed of nineteenth-century 'high society' might perhaps find adequate summary in a paraphrase of the cynical maxim of Gregory the Great: "Ignorance is the mother of decorum." This ignorance differs, however,

from the ignorance of the Middle Ages in that it is sophisticated rather than naïve. The *mondain* of the nineteenth century has replaced the striving for perfection in the Christian negations by the striving for perfection in the *chic* negations. It is Pailleron's distinction that he was the first playwright fully to understand and appreciate this curious group which has withdrawn from life to practise frivolity as the holy men and women of the early Christian era withdrew from life to practise sanctity.

With three exceptions (*Parasite*, *Second Mouvement*, *Cabotins*) Pailleron's *théâtre* is situated exclusively in this narrow *milieu*. Unlike previous dramatists of distinction, he belonged to the *Monde*, understood it, approved its ideals, and wrote from the fullness of affectionate knowledge. His portrait differs, in consequence, from that by a Molière, who was an artist and a *bourgeois*; it differs from portraits by all previous dramatists in that its bias is easy and genial instead of critical and envious. The man who breaks into 'society' by virtue of his achievements can never feel toward it as does the man who has grown up in it. No one of any spirit who has matured a philosophy outside of society can bring himself to view with impartiality this elegant group that looks with supercilious disdain upon the things which he deems sacred. The bitter quality which is the essence of Molière's portrait of the *mondain* came to be generally accepted by succeeding generations of playwrights who felt toward 'society' very much as he did. That Pailleron should have broken with this tradition is certainly one feature of his originality. In this it is obvious that the chief credit must go to the *homme du monde*, who gave the artist within him a new avenue of approach to certain facts of human nature. But we are confronted almost immediately with the reverse of this pleasant medal. Save for two of the early comedies and the last (all of which failed to attain real eminence), the bulk of Pailleron's *répertoire* is confined within the boundaries of this narrow and highly exclusive domain. In other words, if the fashionable in Pailleron enabled the artist to paint an honest portrait of 'high society', he restricted him at the same time to this one *milieu*. If the artist was strong enough to insist upon writing, the *homme du monde* was,

on his side, strong enough to curtail the writing to one subject. This is in itself sufficiently serious, but when we examine Pailleron's work in detail we come upon an even more unfortunate weakness.

The elegant obscurantism of the 'man of the world' will permit genuine interest in but one subject outside the social futilities and sports, and that subject is sex. From the palmy days of the Hôtel de Rambouillet to the *salons* of the twentieth century, this is the one problem outside its own routine upon which 'high society' has been really serious. The influence of the romantic revolt modified somewhat the attitude toward the attractive mystery, transvaluing the quest of *amour* from an intellectual eroticism to a sentimental eroticism. In this it fell in with the tendency manifested by the *élite* to degenerate from the stamina of the *Grand Siècle*. The feature of the situation that interests us is the manifestation of this tendency in the work of Pailleron.

To write plays of wide appeal or enduring value upon the purely social activities is obviously impossible. To secure general attention a work of art must avoid the complicated technicalism of professions or trades; it must deal in situations and struggles that are familiar to all classes. Now, there are few professions or trades that involve a more elaborate dictionary of technical terms than the trade of being 'smart'. Pailleron found himself forced, in consequence, to fall back upon sex, the only subject of general interest permitted by the social idler, and that is precisely what we find to be the essence of his work. The best as well as the worst of his plays centre—every one of them—upon the minutiae of the sex emotion as they appear in 'high society'.

This fact invalidates the comparison with Molière, and suggests the substitution of comparison with Marivaux. Superficially there is much in favor of the parallel. Both authors eschew the violences, the depths, the tragedies of passion, and concentrate upon the early stages of the emotion. But Pailleron differs from the eighteenth-century expert in the irony of his viewpoint. Like Marivaux, he is a master-analyst of the first illusions of young love, but in addition he exhibits a skill no less

delicate in delineating the first disillusionings of young love. In this we can see a resemblance to Musset, especially the Musset of the *Théâtre dans un Fauteuil*. Such dainty miniatures as *Pendant le Bal*, *Le Chevalier Trumeau*, and *L'Autre Motif* embody the same qualities of sentimental idealism and exquisite irony that belong to the nineteenth-century romanticist. Among the plays of larger canvas two alone stand forth: *L'Age Ingrat* and the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie*. Pailleron attempted, it is true, the problem-play made fashionable by Dumas fils, but *Hélène* and the *Faux Ménages* serve only to demonstrate his incapacity for serious drama. They are, despite some fine verse, either stiff or melodramatic, and achieved at best a *succès d'estime*. Of his two great triumphs, *L'Age Ingrat* is the more original, the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie* the more perfect.

In the former we find Pailleron's most original contribution to the study of sex. That he should have been able to offer anything new at all is much to his credit. The field of *amour*, a great favorite with French playwrights, had been pretty thoroughly harvested by his predecessors, from Corneille to Musset; the obvious types of love, from foolish youth to foolish age, had been investigated with masterly penetration, and so completely had this been done that to the ordinary eye no gleanings remained. Pailleron, however, made the brilliant discovery that one moment in the sex life of man had, curiously enough, been wholly ignored by the French stage. This moment, which he chose to call 'the ungrateful age', is the very important moment of indecision, of hesitancy on the borderland between youth and age, the period when "bachelors dream of marriage, and married men dream of celibacy," the time of *la première raison, ou la dernière folie*.

The originality of the idea in the history of the French stage is undeniable, but that it was suited to dramatic treatment is more debatable. A multiple conception, overlapping the domains of youth and age, and depicting the seemingly contradictory results of the same cause, it postulated a number of different actions, each picturing one operation of the principle. In short, the idea, attractive enough in theory, turns out in practice to go counter to all the rules of dramatic concentration. As a

matter of fact, *L'Age Ingrat* has four heroes: La Hirel (bachelor dreaming of marriage), Fondreton (married man dreaming of celibacy), De Sauves (*première raison*), Desaubiers (*dernière folie*). That such a plethora of protagonists would be fatal to unity of ultimate effect was unavoidable. Despite all the technical dexterity of which he was past master, Pailleron failed to coördinate the different actions. There are isolated scenes of great brilliancy, the second act is especially good, but the play as a whole is desultory and episodic.

The Ungrateful Age was popular, but, although appreciated to the full, it failed to satisfy the devotees of the *pièce bien faite*. Public as well as critics called for the masterpiece, and after some interval Pailleron saw fit to oblige. The success of the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie* established its author as satirist of manners, and the comedy itself as the long desired *chef-d'œuvre*. Enthusiasts even went so far as to compare it with the *Femmes Savantes* and suggested that the nineteenth century was at last to have its Molière. There was indeed much obvious similarity. Both plays attack the same abuse, pedantry—as it appears in the *salon*; both satirize the parlor poet, the parlor *érudit*, the busy blue-stocking, the social dabbler in 'platonic love'. What difference there was was felt to be a difference of century, and such difference, it was thought, did not invalidate the soundness of the comparison. This we shall find to be correct as long as we limit the parallel to the satirical portions of the two plays; as long as both authors are engaged in the business of destruction Pailleron measures well by the side of the *Grand Comique*. When it becomes a question, however, of construction, when the time comes to offer a remedy for the prevailing abuse, the difference is unfortunately no longer one of century merely, but also one of author. Where Molière would suggest for counter-irritant to the obscurantism of pedantry the enlightenment of healthy common-sense, Pailleron offers another kind of obscurantism, the obscurantism of the social idler.

The *homme du monde*, as we have seen, can feel interest in but two subjects outside of the social futilities—sports and sex. This means that if he is at one with the truly enlightened in his aversion to pedantry, he immediately parts company with

him the moment it becomes a question of the proper substitute. In other words, where the man of genius in Molière demands as remedy for pedantry the light of sound rationality, the social idler in Pailleron insists upon the sex-emotion as it appears in the members of his elegant and frivolous caste. The solemn offer of the honeymoon *de luxe* as the only palliative for the stupidities of pseudo-learning is of a naïveté that the nineteenth century alone could have failed to appreciate. Indeed, the roar of enthusiasm which greeted Pailleron's message invites ironic commentary upon the psychic havoc wrought in humanity by the romantic upheaval. At no other period of French history would the charming paradox of suggesting something transitory as an antidote to something permanent have escaped the gauntlet of ridicule. The distinction between the *Femmes Savantes* and the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie* is clearly fundamental. Where the seventeenth-century *chef-d'œuvre* is found to be of solid texture throughout, the nineteenth-century facsimile, brilliantly alluring on the surface, is disclosed hollow at the core.

The two plays (*La Souris* and *Cabotins*) that followed the masterpiece served only to confirm the growing disillusion of the discerning. In each case Pailleron was reminiscent of himself, in each comedy he did little more than dilute ideas expressed with vigor either in *L'Age Ingrat* or in the *Monde où l'on s'ennuie*. The evidence was overwhelming that his vein was exhausted, that he had been drawing upon his capital until nothing was left in the bank. It remained for his admirers to accept him as he was, or seek for some explanation for his sudden exhaustion. The chief reason for this unexpected débâcle should now be tolerably clear. An impartial *coup d'œil* over Pailleron's *répertoire* reveals him, aside from a half-dozen single-act gems, as the author of but two successful large comedies, of which one is original in matter but defective in manner, the other sound in structure but weak in ideas. This is not, we must admit, a very substantial monument, but if we consider the forces at odds within him it is surprising that he did so well. A great comedy cannot be made out of small souls, and in 'high society' one cannot look for profound, powerful or dazzling personalities. Inasmuch as the *homme du monde* within Pailleron curtailed the artist's ac-

tivities to this narrow domain, we should be unfair to expect more. These pictures of 'society' are unique in their perfection and for that the artist deserves all credit. That Pailleron went no farther we may attribute to his internal conflict, a conflict which resulted in a partial paralysis of the creative faculty. Where Racine the poet was left free by Racine the gentleman to exploit the greatest, the most terrible, of human passions, Pailleron the playwright was forbidden by Pailleron the gentleman to touch anything beyond the frothy emotions of the *mondain*. At peace with his soul, Racine was able to devote his entire strength to the task in hand, whereas Pailleron, torn by internal dissension, had but a portion of his original energy left over for his work. The shocking discrepancy between the immortal masterpieces of the calm classicist and the capricious trifles of the restless romanticist illustrates once again the old platitude that a house divided against itself cannot endure.

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BOOK REVIEWS

POEMS BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Selected and Edited, with an Introduction, by George McLean Harper, Professor of English in Princeton University. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1923. Pp. xxviii, 453.

WORDSWORTH IN A NEW LIGHT. By Emile Legouis. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1923. Pp. 44.

SELECTED POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Edited by Solomon Francis Gingerich, Associate Professor of English in the University of Michigan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1923. Pp. xxiii, 319.

Dr. Harper's finely fruitful work as student, biographer and critic of Wordsworth makes him the logical editor of this collegiate text, a member of the *Modern Student's Library*. The selections have been wisely made and carefully balanced, and the appendices furnish useful reference material in the *Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff*, *On the Extraordinary Avowal of His Political Principles* and the *Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads*. The Introduction—although restricted to sixteen pages—is an illuminating little essay, with an enkindling quality of style. Its critical insight is especially marked in the statement concerning the *Ode to Duty* and *Elegiac Stanzas Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle in a Storm*, that—

he that comprehends these two poems and perceives that they stand at the very centre and turning-point of the man's natural history and of his poetic career, containing in line after line the essence of many of his other poems, may truly say that he knows the secret of Wordsworth. Everything that is unique or characteristic radiates from this focus. That it is a double focus, and that even here we find no certainty, but only a question, are significant facts.

In *The SEWANEE REVIEW* for October, 1922, a review appeared of Professor Harper's study entitled *Wordsworth's French Daughter*, a little book setting forth most of the framework facts, and establishing them documentarily by reference to the birth and marriage certificates of Caroline Wordsworth, daughter of the poet and of Marie-Anne (or "Annette") Vallon. Professor

Harper's discoveries are supplemented by M. Emile Legouis in two issues of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for 1922, and in his *Wordsworth in a New Light*, the most important points made in the latter treatment being the following: Wordsworth belonged psychologically to the Georgian rather than to the Victorian Age, and certain poems and letters of his show that he did not regard ardency of passion much more disapprovingly than did the normal Georgian; he was not twenty-two when he met Annette at Orleans; she was his senior by four or five years, and gave him lessons in the language; Annette's father was dead and her mother had remarried; some of the letters she wrote him during the war preceding the treaty of Amiens (March 28, 1802) may or may not have reached him, for at least one was seized by the French police; despite the grave obstacles caused by the war (which began in February, 1793) the poet was almost certainly in France in the autumn of 1793, and in that case probably sought, however ineffectually, to see Annette; during the decade of separation both he and Annette underwent changes of purpose and programme, perhaps even some disillusionment, so that the marriage desired in 1792 was not desired in 1802, when Wordsworth, Dorothy, Annette and Caroline spent a month together at Calais, although Wordsworth and 'Madame' Vallon remained true friends then and thereafter. Not a few poetic passages are cited or quoted by Monsieur Legouis as perhaps throwing light on Wordsworth's reaction to these happenings: passages in *Ruth*, *Vaudracour and Julia*, *Guilt and Sorrow*, *The Ruined Cottage*, *The Prelude*, and of course, the famous Calais sonnet as referring to Caroline directly and, in the phrase "untouched by solemn thought," to Annette indirectly. The writer finds Wordsworth's responsibilities—

singularly diminished by the pressure of circumstances. It was the suddenness of the war rather than his own will that prevented him from making immediate amends for his youthful error. It was the long duration of the war that made him turn his thoughts toward another woman when the ten years elapsed since 1792 had almost changed his identity. He did not hide the past from the wife he elected after a long delay, and, on the other hand, he knew how to turn his former beloved into a friend for life.

The researches of Professor Harper and M. Legouis (the latter is the author of *La Jeunesse de Wordsworth*) have, in some not fully informed minds, brought about a disposition to find in the poet a Byronic quality, as in a reference in Mr. Drinkwater's poem, *Lake Winter*, and in a recent article entitled *A Laureate in Love* (could any title be more flippantly unfair?); but Mr. H. W. Garrod properly disposes of this careless, half-malicious supposition when he writes in his *Wordsworth's Lectures and Essays*: "'The Byronic Wordsworth' is on the whole more untrue, I believe, than 'Daddy Wordsworth'." In her new novel, *A Poet's Youth*, Mrs. Margaret L. Woods tries to avoid both of these implications.

Professor Gingerich's addition to the *Riverside College Classics* shows careful editing. In addition to a generous selection from among the shorter poems, it includes several of the more interesting portions of *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, with a short excerpt from *The Recluse*. The Introduction, although useful to the students for whom it is intended, is not particularly good critical writing. Such phrases as "developmental progress," "boundless sympathy," "entirely unique," and "on a par with Nature" are hardly worthy of a text in many respects so well balanced. The Notes, although slight and largely quotational, are convenient, and there are also suggestive comments prefaced to each group of poems.

G. H. C.

SPIRIT AND PERSONALITY: AN ESSAY IN THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION. By William Samuel Bishop. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1923. Pp. xi, 188.

In these times of theological controversy, which too often give evidence of inaccurate and merely superficial thought, it is a great satisfaction, as well as a real advantage, to find such a clear, constructive treatise as this on the fundamental principles of a truly Christian theology. It is a fine piece of careful, exact and reverent theological interpretation.

The book opens with an appreciative and scholarly foreword by Bishop Gailor, Chancellor of the University of the South, in which Dr. Bishop was, for several years, Professor of Dogmatic

Theology and Metaphysics. Personality is the keynote of the work and gives the real solution to the great subjects which the author treats under the chapter-titles: I. The Exultation of Christ; II. The Theology of the Holy Spirit; III. The Divine Trinity and Personality; IV. The Personality of the God-Man; V. Human Personality and Justification by Faith.

The author believes that in *personality* is to be recognized the supreme category of theology, as well as of its kindred sciences, psychology and ethics. Doctrine is traced back to its twofold source—in the New Testament tradition, on the one hand; and in philosophic thought and self-analysis, on the other. Divine revelation and human consciousness are the bases of theological science. The most significant parts of the book are the emphasis placed on the humanity of Christ and the exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity, especially in the application of the concept of personality, making clear the distinction between the Nicene and Athanasian conception of God, and showing how the two distinct lines of Trinitarian interpretation—the Western or Augustinian, and the Greek or Nicene—are found united in the so-called Athanasian Creed, which Dr. Bishop regards as an advance beyond the previous Nicene stage.

We must recognize in the so-called Athanasian Creed the most comprehensive statement of Trinitarian doctrine which is to be found. Inferior to the Nicene Creed in Ecumenical authority, it surpasses the Nicene Creed in scientific comprehensiveness.

Evidently, as he goes on to show, we are here dealing with two distinct lines of theological thought:—

According to the Western sequence of ideas, 'person' bears a relatively abstract meaning, while the Greek 'hypostasis' (which means substance but is translated 'person') always remains concrete. It is to be especially noted that the Greek distinction between 'hypostasis' and 'ousia' is the distinction between 'person' and substance only in so far as 'individual' is distinguished from generic being. Thus while the feature of Nicene orthodoxy is the logic of being, the distinctive mark of Western Trinitarianism is its analytic of personality.

Let it be said at once of the Nicene (and Athanasian) concept of Divine sonship that it does not involve the existence of two (or more) personal Beings, each of whom is that supreme and absolute One known as Jehovah. There is but one Supreme Being—one eternal Source and Fountain of Godhead.

What Dr. Bishop says of this earlier phase of theology may be truly said of conditions to-day:—

This is but an illustration of the working of that principle of evolution which is apparent all through the history of Christian doctrine, whereby that which is implicit in earlier forms is gradually brought forth into fuller and completer expression. This process in its earlier stages is bound to be attended by more or less intellectual confusion, which it is the effort of scientific thinking to eliminate.

For the interpretation of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, and of the Spirit, not impersonal nature, but consciousness itself must be our point of departure. The key to this whole problem of personality lies in the clear and definite recognition of these two 'momenta',—'person' and 'substance', which he designates as the 'by which' and the 'out of which' of consciousness.

The substance is that out of which consciousness exists and is realized, the person or inmost self is that through or by which this same consciousness becomes an actuality. For if it is true that I realize myself, that I exercise self-consciousness, I can only do this out of the material furnished by my substance or nature.

The doctrine of the Trinity is misunderstood only if it is thought to mean that "three equals one". It is not that three Divine Persons are one and the same Divine Person. But it is that three Divine Persons eternally co-exist in the unity of the same Divine 'being' or 'substance'. The consciousness of God as the Absolute One is triune,—not absolutely single nor yet absolutely plural. It is single so far as the *ground* of the Divine consciousness is one and the same; it is plural in so far as there are *three instruments of its self-realization*. This is the true interpretation of the historic phrase "three Persons in one substance".

One of the most striking and significant parts of the book is the author's insistence on the importance of the human nature of Christ. He affirms emphatically that Christ is personally man, and points out very clearly that He is also personally Son of God, and that "it is not a case of either—or, but of both—and, for these two alternatives do not exclude each other."

To construe our Lord's manhood as in no sense personal does seem to imperil the full truth of His humanity. In seeking to maintain that He is *more than* man let us beware lest either a faulty logic or a mistaken devotion lead us to interpret Him to ourselves as in any wise *less* than man. The manhood of Jesus Christ does in fact possess a personal self or centre of consciousness and activity; at the same time that personal self or centre is the personal Ego of the Divine Logos—the eternal Son of God. Christ is a human Person just as truly as He is a Divine Person, yet not therefore two persons but one.

It must be confessed that in both Greek and Latin Catholicism the humanity of the Virgin Mary and of the saints has obscured (really, taken the place of) the manhood of the Saviour from the age of the General Councils down through the Reformation period, and even to the present time. Mediæval Catholicism has never been able to do full justice to our Lord's humanity. Nor can the veneration of the Sacrament of Christ's Body take the place of the worship of the concrete and living Christ Himself.

We may call attention to the fact that the condemnation passed by five of the first six of the General Councils, was placed upon those who denied the real and perfect humanity of Jesus.

In a recent book in the series of *Handbooks of Catholic Faith and Practice*, it is plainly asserted that "Traditionalism is that conception of Christ which maintains that His personality is *not* human but literally Divine; that Incarnation means the *entrance* of Deity into human conditions and human experiences." This is nothing but Docetism, and is more heretical than the doctrines of Apollinaris and Eutyches, which were condemned by the second and fourth General Councils, and only shows how far 'Traditionalism' has wandered from the Truth. Against all such, and many other popular misconceptions, Dr. Bishop's book is a stimulating and helpful antidote.

CHARLES L. WELLS.

The University of the South.

EUROPE SINCE 1918. By Herbert Adams Gibbons. New York: The Century Company. 1923. Pp. 622.

A residence of fifteen years in the Balkan countries as well as in Western Europe; a wide reading in documents and books dealing with European and Near Eastern problems; and the successful practice of up-to-date reportorial methods in interviewing and obtaining information from many leading Continental statesman, bureaucrats and diplomats; have well qualified Dr. Gibbons for his rôle as an interpreter of contemporary Europe and the Mediterranean countries, to the American public. The present volume is the latest of a considerable series by the same author, and is written with skill and vigor. Nevertheless, in spite of the writer's disclaimer, that "he is not pro-anything" and that his "sole ambition has been to record what he has observed," he *has* a thesis to advocate which runs like a red thread throughout his book. That thesis is that the Peace of Versailles and the later subsidiary treaties with Germany's allies are penetrated by the greed and the spirit of revenge of the "Big Four", not even excepting America's spokesman—"To the surprise and astonishment of everyone, it was the American President who came to the rescue of Old World diplomacy." See p. 66.) There is much to be said for Dr. Gibbons's contention, and he pleads it admirably and convincingly in the six chapters which deal with the treaties of Versailles, of St. Germain and of Trianon.

After a survey of the changes in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Balkans, he returns to his attack on the peace settlements, particularly in the last portion of the book, treating of the Conferences from 1920 to 1923, of French militarism and imperialism (which last he examines with fairness and sympathy), of the invasion of the Ruhr and of the inter-allied debts. In all this Dr. Gibbons is at his best. If he plays the part of the advocate rather than that of the historian, it may be said that the pleader is more interesting than the judge, and, moreover, that such advocacy is needed, for most of us have gone somewhat too far in our admiration of France. He capably discusses also the complicated and, to our American reading public, little understood problems which the Austro-

Hungarian Succession States, Rumania, Poland or Jugoslavia will have to face. How true, for instance, is his remark concerning Rumania: "The difficulty is the same as in all the Succession States of the Hapsburg Empire. The new masters are culturally inferior and politically less experienced than the former masters, who are now at their mercy." Excellent, too, are the chapters on Turkey, the Entente Powers, and the question of the Straits.

Like all advocates, however, Dr. Gibbons lacks the serenity and breadth of view of the true disciple of Clio. He is at his worst when he speaks of the League of Nations, which he mentions only to abuse, and which he thinks "impotent, with or without the United States as a member, to restore Europe to peace until the three Furies—Vanity, Greed and Revenge—cease raging." He confesses (p. 609) to giving "very little space to the League of Nations," for, he adds, it has not had "a vital part in European affairs." We challenge this statement, and we think Dr. Gibbons has been a little disingenuous in suppressing mention of the achievements of the League. While it is quite true—as Dr. Gibbons has no difficulty in showing—that the peace settlements of 1919-1920 were the outcome of immemorial hatreds and fears and were settled by the Old Diplomacy, the League of Nations sprang from an entirely different source—worldwide public opinion, led and organized by the spokesmen of the New Diplomacy of open covenants openly arrived at. The Assembly at Geneva has become the forum of the World's Public Opinion, and that means that, however slowly and hesitatingly, the direction of international affairs is being transferred from the hands of the rulers and is being placed under the guardianship of enlightened public sentiment. This will steadily make for moral progress, for the history of civilization has shown that the people, when left to themselves, are more moral than their rulers, and that moral progress is one of the laws of history.

SEDLEY L. WARE.

The University of the South.

ERASMUS: A STUDY OF HIS LIFE, IDEALS AND PLACE IN HISTORY. By Preserved Smith. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1923. Pp. 479.

The philosopher of reform should die before the reformers begin to carry out his philosophy. Therein lies the secret of the glorification of Voltaire and Marx by their disciples, and therein lies the tragedy of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Had Erasmus not lived during the Reformation, had he died about 1516, after his famous edition of the New Testament had been published, he would have gone down in history as the greatest of the humanists, the precursor of the Reformers, the scholar and philosopher who made possible the greatness of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. But Erasmus died in 1536, after a squabble of almost fifteen years with the Reformers; and, although still the scholar and humanist whose work had made possible the Reformation, became also one of the opponents of the Reformation and a butt for some of Luther's bitterest jibes. Historians have now to explain how this happened and, in so doing, directly or indirectly to compare Erasmus with Luther.

It is easier to attribute greatness to the man of action than to the man of ideas. Wherefore, in most comparisons of the humanist, Erasmus, with the reformer, Luther, the humanist has been made to appear the lesser genius. Never before, however, has it fallen to the lot of one historian to write learned and impartial biographies of both men. When, therefore, Professor Smith, having already written a masterful study of the *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, wrote his *Erasmus*, he was better able than anyone else—certainly in this country—to pass judgment on the two men. The present work is the product of more than a decade of research in whatever libraries Erasmiana were to be found, and with the assistance of a number of American and foreign scholars. Practically everything of importance that was already known to have value and a good deal that was hitherto unknown has been used. The result is a volume that does not always make easy reading, but that is scholarly in the best sense of the word.

Professor Smith applies to Erasmus the hypothesis, recently advanced and nowhere more clearly than in his own *Age of the Reformation*, that the Renaissance and the Reformation were

cognate phases of the same movement, which gradually became opposed to each other, and finds that—

he at first educated the Reformers and then did his best to get them a fair hearing. But, after 1521, he diverged more and more from them, and primarily for the two reasons that his interests emphasized the cause of learning and theirs the cause of dogmatic religion, and because he both distrusted and feared a popular rebellion, evidently verging more and more toward violence.

The failure of Erasmus thereafter to come out definitely for or against the Reformation Professor Smith attributes not so much to a petty straddling and to a decent wish to avoid personal danger as to a desire not to commit himself in a struggle in which he saw both sides objectively and was claimed by both as a partisan. On the whole, Professor Smith's presentation is more favorable to Luther, who "acted a nobler, more heroic, and also a historically more justifiable part than did Erasmus." One cannot help feeling, however, that, after all, Luther was irascible, intolerant, stubborn and self-righteous, while Erasmus was none of these; and that if Luther's part was "historically more justifiable" it is because Luther made history more than Erasmus did. Who can say that a rational and tolerant universal church would not have been as justifiable as several hundred sects more or less rational and tolerant? The one was what Erasmus wanted; the other is what Luther made possible.

LOUIS R. GOTTSCHALK.

The University of Louisville.

THE HISTORY OF UTOPIAN THOUGHT. By Joyce Oramel Hertzler. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1923. Pp. 314.

This is a brief introduction to that idealistic social thought which can be classified as Utopian, giving a rather hasty review of a number of theories of a human society organized in an ideal state as they have taken shape more or less clearly in the minds of prophets, philosophers, and socialists. The author then essays a general analysis of these visions and theories, and presents a theory to account for their origin and an evaluation of the contribution actually made by the prophets, visionaries and

philosophers to social progress. For their ideas have been in many cases wrought into later and more practical social constructions; some of the chief institutions of present society that make for human betterment can be traced directly to the Utopians, and thus they have "played a stupendous part in shaping human history," a part for which they have not always received such large credit as the author would accord them. Utopia, however, is beyond the realization of human society; social perfection is not possible, is always a fleeting goal, an illusion only. We can have only social progress.

With the author's main conclusions hardly anyone will disagree. Still it is possible to feel that Isaiah and Plato are hardly to be discussed from the same angle as Morelly, Owen, Bellamy, and H. G. Wells, that there is even a certain absurdity in the attempt to do so. The teaching of Jesus is of an entirely different character from the theorizings of the modern Utopians. It certainly shows complete understanding of human nature—one thing which the author maintains none of the Utopians possessed (p.302), and it does not aim at a perfect state in "this world". Consequently there is little in the book that would lead anyone to classify writers in the field of sociology as philosophers capable of dealing in theory, historical review or scientific critique with the deeper aspects of the problem of human life. The present writer still feels that sociology has not become a science, although it has brought about many valuable contributions, like the present one, to the study of social institutions.

J. B. EDWARDS.

Wells College.

THE NORTHWARD COURSE OF EMPIRE. By Vilhjalmur Stefansson. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1922. Pp. xx, 275.

Even a new edition of a widely used school geography asserts that "north of the arctic circle it is always cold." Mr. Stefansson recalls how at Fort Yukon, north of the circle, while he was recovering from typhoid in Hudson Stuck's hospital, he and the archdeacon had to retreat into the cellar from a steaming heat that reached 97°. Beyond Greenland's icy mountains, on the low

north coast of that most northerly known land, the grass and flowers are luxuriant (not just "mosses and lichens") and animals browse in the polar summer. We all know that the sun's rays have less power in the North, where they slant so; but the geographies never tell us that for some weeks each summer the arctic zone receives from the sun more heat per square mile than the tropics, because of the constant daylight.

Now take the winters. When Stefansson was a little boy in North Dakota, he used to trudge to school in temperatures as low as he has ever seen along the north Canadian coast, or amid the ice of the Arctic Ocean. The theoretical minimum for the North Pole is about 60° below. But at a town in Montana the inhabitants have recorded 68° . What brings maximum cold is distance from the sea, vertically or horizontally, as much as it is distance from the equator. Furthermore, there are people in the Arctic dwelling there permanently by choice,—white men, some even from the tropics, and most of them seem to prefer the winters to the summers. No Eskimo could be persuaded that a summer anywhere could be more enjoyable than a winter. Perhaps the summer plague of arctic insects conditions this view. But Stefansson finds acclimated whites who prefer the polar winters not only to polar summers, but to southern winters.

The southern countries have always believed the distant northern lands virtually uninhabitable. Like all men, they dislike what they are not used to and do not understand, and they could not indeed cope with ultra-northern problems, save after generations of experience in a new technique of living. So the Roman thought France and Germany frigid wildernesses. So the thirteenth-century professors at Montpellier ascribed to England an unendurable climate, and so Camoëns speaks of "the cold Rhine". So at the peace of 1763 France wished to surrender Canada rather than Guadeloupe, and Franklin urged England to accept, not that Canada was worth more than the sugar island, but for merely military reasons. So in 1867 the American purchase of Alaska for seven million good gold dollars was to most people Seward's Folly. So in the 70's, when the Canadian Pacific Railway was being planned, a commission sat in London to determine whether Manitoba could ever be fit for British colo-

nists: the learned commission heard and weighed the testimony of men who had travelled and lived there, and concluded in substance that the country would never be inhabited save by fur-traders, self-sacrificing missionaries, and Indians who could know no better. In the centre of this frigid wilderness stands Winnipeg to-day with 300,000 inhabitants.

Why is it that not only as regards polar conditions, but in so many other fields the knowledge possessed by specialists remains for decades or centuries unknown to the mass of the educated, sometimes even to scientific writers? One reason for lay ignorance is our higher education. Three lustrums ago we were absorbing the learning which our professors had acquired five before that. This, because catching every latest development is difficult, we continue to hand on to *our* students, the most receptive of whom will become teachers and bequeath these ripe ideas to *their* pupils. So the mass of men keep on believing in miasmatic swamps, in the Latin race, in the self-evident truth that all men were created free and equal, in prenatal influence, in Fulton as the inventor of the steamboat and Morse of the telegraph, in exports as vastly desirable and imports as a bane, and in the arctic as a hopeless frozen "barren ground", although the specialists in these respective fields have known and agreed for a score or a century of years that the common idea is nonsense.

Thus disapproved or superseded ideas hang on even in *scientific* books, wherever the author is not speaking in his own particular bailiwick. For example, Stefansson, although he writes extensively and well on the bright prospects for aerial navigation in the perpetual daylight, short routes and abundant landing-places of the estival arctic, yet misquotes Tennyson, and echoes the general error that there were no suggestions of the *how* of airy navies in the time of Tennyson. (An airplane with all the essential features was designed by Henson in 1843, after centuries of thought and experiment, as any specialist knows.)

As frontispiece Mr. Stefansson has borrowed my chart of the northward course of civilization's leadership, with a brief and satisfactory addition to the theory, showing how living creatures can stand a fall of temperature better than a rise. But civilized man never really submits to a fall—by warmer clothes, houses

and food he preserves a warm temperature. The advance of civilization makes such maintenance easy in increasingly cold and stimulating climates, which is one reason why the world's leadership has drifted northward.

The personal origin of this theory has occasioned Mr. Stefansson some trouble; but, as I have pointed out, the idea of caused northward progress can be traced back to 1883: and bare ideas are in themselves worth little. They are easily conceived, abundant, and helpless to survive of themselves; granted a good birth, it is the development and establishment of the idea that is difficult and valuable.

So does this book splendidly develop and establish the livableness and profit of the far north. Mines and oil-wells are appearing there. Spitzbergen is changing from a summer resort to a land exporting coal and, presently, smelted iron. Elsewhere timber, furs and agriculture are exploited possibilities, but it is as a meat-producing country, through the reindeer and the apparently readily domesticable ovibos (musk-ox) that Stefansson sees its greatest future. The reindeer herds of Alaska have grown to over 200,000, whose venison is now bringing a high price in American hotels, and the world's increasing shortage of meat promises a brilliant future for the ranches of northern Canada, Alaska, Siberia and the islands of the Arctic Sea. Transportation will be easy,—passengers by air, reindeer by hoof, or carcasses even by submarine, since the World War proved the entire practicability of under-ice navigation,

A few pertinent facts are omitted. Stefansson offers much testimony as to how highly people like the Arctic climate and other local offerings, but little as to *why* they like it. *De gustibus disputandum est*, if we are to have science. What is the effect of dampness in the Arctic cold? How much of Huntington's life-giving variety of temperature is there? What are the monthly averages of temperature, not simply the extremes? How healthy are Negroes in the far north, *statistically* speaking? And where is the index? Finally, could not the Yukon mosquitos be foiled by the invention of a costume of, say, many-quilted mosquito-netting, cool but thick?

S. C. GILFILLAN.

The University of the South.

THE CHILD'S HOUSE. A COMEDY OF VANESSA FROM THE AGE OF EIGHT OR THEREABOUTS UNTIL SHE HAD CLIMBED THE STEPS AS FAR AS THIRTEEN. By Marjory MacMurchy. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1923. Pp. 243.

Fortunately for themselves and for childhood, lovers of children are not particularly rare persons; understanders of children are fewer; and it is a red-letter moment when among those who love *and* understand we come upon one who also remembers. Blake and Barrie have remembered; Lucas and Grahame and Stevenson and De la Mare; the Lambs and Miss Alcott and Hugh Walpole. To that little company of joy and pity and humor and the sorrow that is half joy now comes Miss MacMurchy, with her veritable Vanessa, to accept, with the openness that publication occasions, the place among them that has long since become hers of right in the quiet background thoughts and feelings behind her busy life as a Canadian journalist and social student.

We are glad that she has not denied us our share of Vanessa, who is symbol and reality at once, as are Wendy and Harold and Jeremy and all their kind. Locally and technically, Vanessa is Vanessa Brown; universally, she is Little Girl. Miss MacMurchy not so much explores Vanessa's mental and emotional processes as re-experiences them, with the old wonder in a setting of new enlightenment. But the enlightenment keeps its place, and does not permit itself to become a part of the scene, nor to change the currents of the atmosphere. It is simply a sympathy-footnote that accompanies the text, dissociable at any moment in the interest of those dreams and desires of recapturing which the delicate humors and sympathies of this book engender. We consider with Vanessa the dubieties of dissimilarity; the nature of relatives; the qualities of boys other than Hector (one's adored brother) and even, sometimes, those of Hector; the quintessence of Christmas, so hard to come at; the degree of her sister Maud's pulchritude; the responsibilities of being a lady; the choice of a vocation. We experience with her the lyric perfection of a stroll in the country under a green silk parasol; the difficulties of parties; the inexhaustible pleasures of play and picnic; the physical delights and social dangers of

sleighting; the chastening rebuke administered by a marvellous father who ate and drank, indeed, "but not as one who needed nutriment;" the strange mendacities of Annie Guay and the importances and requirements of Cynthia Burden. In all of these problems and eventfulnesses we find her sturdy little soul, guided without fuss or fervor by Mrs. Brown (one of the most lovable and dependable mothers in literature of this *genre*), opening seasonable petals of beauty and of hope. Miss MacMurchy shows us that Vanessa's consciousness has something to say to ours, that the child is not merely an adult *in petto*, but a being having its own processes and fidelities, its own insights, its own set of values, not seldom truer than our own. As Lander believed—

Children are not men or women; they are almost as different creatures, in many respects, as if they were never to be one or the other; they are unlike as buds are unlike flowers, and almost as blossoms are unlike fruits.

As she slowly passes from eight to thirteen, Vanessa is variously revealed by such hints and glosses as the following:—

If a mould had been invented of the average little girl she would have poured herself into it with sublime cheerfulness, her substance gurgling with satisfaction as it ran to the desired consummation.

The world was quite fluid . . . and might change its appearance at any time without warning.

With a soul of heavenly peace, Vanessa sat on the floor of the best room and held the green silk parasol over her head. La, la, la, a little song bubbled up through the green shadows from Vanessa's lips. Who else had a green parasol? . . . She couldn't stay in the best room, the idea was preposterous; she would go out into the world with the green silk parasol.

In any case, they left her alone, a little passion under the table, quite sure that she was being laughed at, but too near the brink of what souls and bodies mean to care about that.

But the inexplicable interference of nature, when you didn't deserve it, had produced a hush in Vanessa's mind; you ought to be careful, or good; by preference both.

The kitten believed in her; he was always on her side. Vanessa was passionately convinced that the kitten was a person.

Vanessa was conscious of the strangest feeling up her spine when she read these lines. She was awed. But it was her own secret.

Vanessa's perfect mother is thus suggested:—

. . . set like the sun to shine on the just and unjust alike amongst her children.

. . . she restrained her emotions, casting herself once again upon the altar which is the permanent dwelling-place of those who are helping other people to grow up.

She saw Mrs. Brown's face, lovely through the night, bending over her, and all at once she discovered that her mother knew how it felt.

. . . the mysterious sweetness which came into her mother's smile when she looked at a baby.

Having uttered these words firmly, kindly, and with a propelling force which the mildest of women can use when she chooses, Mrs. Brown vanished.

. . . Vanessa cast one anguished and pathetic look at her mother. To her amazement, that lady's countenance was brilliant with suppressed merriment. She said nothing, but she shaped her lips into a kiss, she nodded with the emphasis of a flower tossed by the wind, her eyes shone upon Vanessa. These eyes with their reassuring laughter said as plainly as if the words had been spoken: "All is well. Nothing to fear. There is really no hardship in being a lady. You'll see. The future still is yours, is yours, little Vanessa." Then Mrs. Brown looked down again at her mending.

The true secret of the mother-and-child relation and the invitation of the borderland between childhood and girlhood come to Vanessa in the finely conceived concluding paragraph of this unusual and delightful book, a passage too long—and, for the purposes of a review, too attached to its own indispensable setting—to justify quotation. Whether or not *The Child's House* achieves popularity (our own guess is that it will), it is, artistically and psychologically, a success.

G. H. C.

GREEK BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE. By Henry Osborn Taylor. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. 1922. Pp. 151.

The author's plan is carried out in five chapters: I. The early Biology; II. The Hippocratics; III. Aristotle's Biology; IV. Progress in Anatomy; V. The Final System: Galen. In a sixth chapter—The Linkage with Modern Time—is indicated the influence of ancient biology and medicine upon distinguished biologists and physicians during the centuries following Galen.

The book is addressed to the layman, being untechnical in both language and presentation. Many readers will find it a revelation of the amazing advance made by the Greeks in these special departments of knowledge. Of the countless good men and true who labored for the advancement of the healing art it was impossible for the author to give any detailed account, but he has left us in no doubt of our great debt to Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen.

Hippocrates, a Greek of fifth century Athens, is the protagonist in the great drama. To him the medical profession owes: its scientific basis, as a result of its emancipation from magic and superstition; its primary axiom, the *vis medicatrix naturae*, the healing power of nature; its ethics, embodied in the well-known Hippocratic oath; and its dignity, so often reiterated in the *Aphorisms* of Hippocrates.

Two pertinent aphorisms Dr. Taylor quotes, although they lose no little of their epigrammatic value in translation:—

Life is short and art is long, opportunity fleeting, experiment dangerous, decision difficult.

Whoever is to acquire a competent knowledge of medicine ought to have the following advantages: a natural disposition; instruction; a favorable position for study; early tuition; love of labor; leisure.

Throughout the Middle Ages Greek thought was embalmed in the closed systems of Galen and Aristotle. It was not until the sixteenth century that, with a reawakened scientific spirit, men began to question their ancient medical and biological heritage. Since that time the pendulum has swung from a complete repudiation and a public burning of the works of Galen to a fairer

estimate of Greek medical achievement. Great as is our debt, concludes Dr. Taylor, to these mighty pioneers of old for the substance of their contribution to the healing art, greater still is our debt to them for their spirit,—that clear spirit of scientific investigation which has come to be universally recognized as one of the immortal legacies of Greece.

HENRY M. GASS.

The University of the South.

THE GENESIS OF THE WAR. By the Right Honorable Herbert Henry Asquith. New York: George H. Doran Company. 1923. Pp. 405.

As one who was Prime Minister of England for seven years before and two years during the World War, Mr. Asquith would be thought to have played a significant part in the events leading up to that War and to possess a tremendous fund of valuable information upon its genesis. Memoirs which would have given his individual interpretation of the course of history during his term of office, have revealed his own and his associates' mental processes, and have disclosed important secrets that could not be learned in any other way would have been an eminently useful contribution to the many admirable statements that of late years have been put at the disposal of the historian. But the very facts that Mr. Asquith played a significant part in the politics and diplomacy of the pre-war era, and must therefore take a peculiarly personal attitude toward that period, render him incapable of being anything but an *ex parte* historian of it, no matter how honest and sincere his intentions may be.

For that reason the present work is a disappointment. It is not an intimate and confidential memoir of Mr. Asquith's part in the trend of affairs leading up to the great catastrophe. There is very little in it that is personal, that centres about the author, or that can be told by him as no one else can tell it. There is even less in it that is not already known through less biased sources than the book of one who must inevitably be an apologist for British policy. Mr. Asquith has simply rehashed the story of the decades before the War, modestly but lamentably giving himself a small part in his account. If the rehashing had at least been skilful, the book would be less disappointing. But Mr.

Asquith is not one of Clio's favorite sons. He tells his story without literary adornments, without any sense of proportion, without regard to chronological limitations, with few and grudging concessions to the most recent historical investigations and with a too strong English prepossession. Evidently he and his publishers started out with the intention of making the book a four-hundred-page volume, and they succeeded, by dint of large print, short paragraphs, padding, repetition, superfluous addenda, and an appendix of documents, all of which can easily be consulted elsewhere and one of which had already been given in the text.

The entire work would seem to have no *raison d'être* save for the fact that Mr. Asquith is exercised by three things that he immediately proceeds to destroy. The first of these is the former Kaiser's memoirs, which, after all, no one had appeared to take very seriously. Mr. Asquith maintains that William possessed the "readiness of a credulous and prejudiced judgment to accept gossip for evidence and rumor for proof." He maintains his thesis ably, but the many pages on this point are devoted to nothing more than the slaying of a corpse. Mr. Asquith is also anxious to refute the charge that England was militarily unprepared for the War; and it will doubtless surprise some of his American readers to discover that in 1911 England had available a well-trained and equipped army of almost 600,000 regulars and territorials (exclusive of reserves and Dominion troops) and that in 1909 the Government had so well "investigated the whole of the ground covered by a possible war with Germany" (p. 181) that by 1914 "the draft Orders in Council accompanied the King wherever he went in time of profound peace, as well as being kept set up in type in the printer's office; so that on a sudden outbreak of war they could be circulated and put into operation at a moment's notice" (p. 183). Finally, Mr. Asquith wishes to destroy all notions that the Entente Cordiale was anything more than it purported to be upon the surface. He admits that there had been secret "conversations" between French and English naval and military experts; that on the basis of these England concentrated her fleet in the North Sea while the French fleet devoted its attention to the Mediterranean, although in one place (p. 133) he asserts that England and France would have done

so in any case; and that because of these conversations Grey gave France on August 2, 1914, the assurance of protection of her Atlantic coastline against the German fleet, a procedure which he argues (p. 134) was an act of neutrality and would not have led to war if Belgium had not been violated.

Next to the chapters on the military situation in the British Empire just before the War, the most valuable parts of the book are the comments upon the characters of some of the men with whom Mr. Asquith came into contact. If the book had contained more of these personal touches, this work might have been a mine of information for the inquirer of to-day and the historian of the future. As it is, it is of slight value save as an indication of Mr. Asquith's present state of mind.

LOUIS R. GOTTSCHALK.

The University of Louisville.

THROWN IN. By Newton MacTavish. Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada. 1923. Pp. xi, 196.

Mr. MacTavish is a true humorist. He understands that there is an emotional and moral element in humor, and that its basis is sympathy. He would, we think, agree with Pater that it is "the laughter which blends with tears . . . and which in its most exquisite moments, is one with pity," and with Churton Collins, that in its highest aspects it is "the smile on Wisdom's lips." "The test of true comedy," remarks Meredith, "is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter."

The present volume contains some twenty-three sketches of life in a Canadian village about thirty years ago. All of them are highly readable, with a peculiar flavor of wholesome, nay-I-have-an-eye-of-you sociality; most of them are attractively anecdotal and shrewdly revelatory of character; some of them show a subtle, reticent wonder touching the mysteries of source and destiny. They are distinctively Canadian in tone and quality, without being parochially so, for they deal with social, political and religious conditions that made up the environment of folk of British—largely Scotch—origin in a new and sparsely settled part of Ontario. In each of his subjects—

whether slight, like albums and almanacs, or more substantial, like church and schoolhouse—we feel an atmosphere of suggestion through which blow little, sudden gusts of the essential spirit of the theme. And there are passages of lyric enjoyment of life and of reflective questioning of it that could not occur in unauthentic humor. Would we know the old-time country church? Mr. MacTavish's pleasant, comrade-like pictures show it to us in "The Organ," "The Revival," "The Choir". Sports and excitements are provided for in "Croquet" (an unusually amusing account, this!), "The Fall Fair" and "The Excursion"; while "The Tavern," "The Temperance Lodge," "The Blacksmith Shop," "The Post-Office" and "The General Store" give us village contacts and collisions. "The Source" and "The Agnostic" touch matters of spiritual moment; and "The Log-House" contains a really memorable little picture of pioneer habits of thought and living. Perhaps in this fine sketch the author's skill is best shown, for here his knowledge, memory, insight and style appear in a happy equilibrium and are all more than usually true to themselves. Yet throughout the volume narrative is well balanced with comment, and both, in the affectionate English sense of the word, are *homely* and human.

These sketches were first published serially in the *Canadian Magazine*, which Mr. MacTavish has edited for about sixteen years, and to which he is now contributing a second group of papers of similar quality. He has won for himself a definite place among those kindly folk-humorists who are concerned with the social truth of their work rather than with the achieving of mere flippancy and facetiousness. Humor which laughs at itself and admires its own cleverness is spurious as humor, whatever its ability at times to relieve and divert. The humor of *Thrown In* does much more than this: it refreshes and interprets, and it invites its readers to return. "I have been told," Mr. MacTavish writes the reviewer, "that these sketches are amusing, but if I knew that they have induced in someone, somewhere, even one tear I should feel that they have not been written in vain." They have not been written in vain.

G. H. C.

BOOK NOTICES

THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF LYOF N. TOLSTOI. Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1923. Pp. xviii, 485.

Although some of these plays appeared during Tolstoi's lifetime and practically all of them afterward, yet those posthumously published were in some cases much mutilated by censorship. Mr. Dole has had access to the original papers, and his translations are authentic and complete. The plays in general are much more moralistic than artistic, but they have undeniable power in their melancholy—sometimes sordid and gloomy—atmospheres and plots.

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. By Edward Albert. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1923. Pp. viii, 632.

Mr. Albert, an experienced teacher attached to George Watson's College, Edinburgh, has provided here a text-book of a practical rather than a critical cast, comprehensive in scope and clear in presentation, with tables of literary types and of prose and metrical forms, a bibliography and numerous exercises. The necessary compactness of the book, although it makes for usefulness, makes against charm of style.

REPRESENTATIVE AMERICAN SHORT STORIES. Edited by Alexander Jesup. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. 1923. Pp. xxxviii, 974.

This is a faithfully executed task, including seventy-four *really* representative specimens of the American short story from 1788 to 1921; a critical and informational preface; and appendices presenting references for study and a well selected list of American short stories, arranged first according to authorship and then chronologically.

INTELLIGENCE-TESTING. By Rudolf Pintner. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1923. Pp. vii, 406.

Dr. Pintner, Professor of Education in Teachers College, Columbia University, presents here a simple history of intelligence-testing, describes the various tests now available for individuals and for groups, and usefully summarizes the chief results of the movement.

OVID. THE LOVER'S HANDBOOK. Translated, with an Introduction, by F. A. Wright, Classical Department, Birkbeck College. London: George Routledge & Sons; New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. 1923. Pp. 305.

To this translation of the *Ars Amatoria* there is a capably organized and scholarly Introduction, discussing Ovid's personality and works, his influence on English Literature, the *Art of Love* and the circumstances of Ovid's exile. There is also a useful bibliography.

THE WRITER'S INDEX OF GOOD FORM AND GOOD ENGLISH. By John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1923. Pp. 261.

A very useful and well arranged handbook, dealing with the preparation of papers; good form in letter-writing; the uses of capitals, italics, hyphens, punctuation marks, etc., and making suggestions as to spelling, pronunciation, diction and phrasing. Some few inconsistencies and typographical errors mar it slightly, yet it is a guide of real value to college students, especially freshmen.

CREATIVE SPIRITS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By Georg Brandes. Translated by Rasmus B. Anderson. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1923. Pp. x, 478.

The first nine of these twelve essays have appeared in a volume, now out of print, entitled *Eminent Authors of the Nineteenth Century*. To these admirable studies—including analyses of Paul Heyse, John Stuart Mill, Ernest Renan, Gustave Flaubert, Björnstjerne Björnson, and Henrik Ibsen—Dr. Brandes now adds stimulating chapters on Swinburne, Garibaldi and Napoleon. In his first preface he explains how diversified his treatments are, ranging from close, exhaustive portraiture, or precise, immediate photography, to variously psychological, æsthetic and historical modes of approach and revelation. In his present preface, although he gives criticism its full due as an art, he feels that, even at their best, such studies, "are glimpses of our own nature. . . . While we are presenting other people, it is our own work, our admirations, our interests, our friendships, our youth" which "attracts attention on the sea of time before it sinks to the bottom—the shadow of a dream."